

15

Part II

Second Series

Selected works of Jawaharlal Nehru

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Second Series

15 Part II













"So the story of Jawaharlal Nehru is that of a man who evolved, who grew in storm and stress till he became the representative of much that was noble in his time. It is the story of a generous and gracious human being who summed up in himself the resurgence of the 'third world' as well as the humanism which transcends dogmas and is adapted to the contemporary context. His achievement, by its very nature and setting, was much greater than that of a Prime Minister. And it is with the conviction that the life of this man is of importance not only to scholars but to all, in India and elsewhere, who are interested in the valour and compassion of the human spirit that the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund has decided to publish a series of volumes consisting of all that is significant in what Jawaharlal Nehru spoke and wrote . . . the whole corpus should help to remind us of the quality and endeavour of one who was not only a leader of men and a lover of mankind, but a completely integrated human being."

Indira Gandhi

**Selected  
works of  
Jawaharlal  
Nehru**





AT DELHI AIRPORT, 1 JANUARY 1951

# **Selected works of Jawaharlal Nehru**

**Second Series**

**Volume Fifteen**

**Part II**

**(26 October 1950 – 28 February 1951)**

**A Project of the  
Jawaharlal Nehru  
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## FOREWORD

Jawaharlal Nehru is one of the key figures of the twentieth century. He symbolised some of the major forces which have transformed our age.

When Jawaharlal Nehru was young, history was still the privilege of the West; the rest of the world lay in deliberate darkness. The impression given was that the vast continents of Asia and Africa existed merely to sustain their masters in Europe and North America. Jawaharlal Nehru's own education in Britain could be interpreted, in a sense, as an attempt to secure for him a place within the pale. His letters of the time are evidence of his sensitivity, his interest in science and international affairs as well as of his pride in India and Asia. But his personality was veiled by his shyness and a facade of nonchalance, and perhaps outwardly there was not much to distinguish him from the ordinary run of men. Gradually there emerged the warm and universal being who became intensely involved with the problems of the poor and the oppressed in all lands. In doing so, Jawaharlal Nehru gave articulation and leadership to millions of people in his own country and in Asia and Africa.

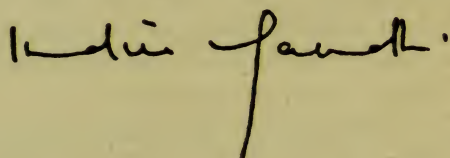
That imperialism was a curse which should be lifted from the brows of men, that poverty was incompatible with civilisation, that nationalism should be poised on a sense of international community and that it was not sufficient to brood on these things when action was urgent and compelling—these were the principles which inspired and gave vitality to Jawaharlal Nehru's activities in the years of India's struggle for freedom and made him not only an intense nationalist but one of the leaders of humanism.

No particular ideological doctrine could claim Jawaharlal Nehru for its own. Long days in jail were spent in reading widely. He drew much from the thought of the East and West and from the philosophies of the past and the present. Never religious in the formal sense, yet he had a deep love for the culture and tradition of his own land. Never a rigid Marxist, yet he was deeply influenced by that theory and was particularly impressed by what he saw in the Soviet Union on his first visit in 1927. However, he realised that the world was too complex, and man had too many facets, to be encompassed by any single or total explanation. He himself was a socialist with an abhorrence of regimentation and a democrat who was anxious to reconcile his faith in civil liberty with the necessity of mitigating economic and social wretchedness. His struggles, both within himself and with the outside world, to adjust such seeming contradictions are what make his life and work significant and fascinating.

As a leader of free India, Jawaharlal Nehru recognised that his country could neither stay out of the world nor divest itself of its own interest in world affairs. But to the extent that it was possible, Jawaharlal Nehru sought to speak objectively

and to be a voice of sanity in the shrill phases of the 'cold war'. Whether his influence helped on certain occasions to maintain peace is for the future historian to assess. What we do know is that for a long stretch of time he commanded an international audience reaching far beyond governments, that he spoke for ordinary, sensitive, thinking men and women around the globe and that his was a constituency which extended far beyond India.

So the story of Jawaharlal Nehru is that of a man who evolved, who grew in storm and stress till he became the representative of much that was noble in his time. It is the story of a generous and gracious human being who summed up in himself the resurgence of the 'third world' as well as the humanism which transcends dogmas and is adapted to the contemporary context. His achievement, by its very nature and setting, was much greater than that of a Prime Minister. And it is with the conviction that the life of this man is of importance not only to scholars but to all, in India and elsewhere, who are interested in the valour and compassion of the human spirit, that the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund has decided to publish a series of volumes consisting of all that is significant in what Jawaharlal Nehru spoke and wrote. There is, as is to be expected in the speeches and writings of a man so engrossed in affairs and gifted with expression, much that is ephemeral; this will be omitted. The official letters and memoranda will also not find place here. But it is planned to include everything else and the whole corpus should help to remind us of the quality and endeavour of one who was not only a leader of men and a lover of mankind, but a completely integrated human being.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Indira Gandhi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long vertical stroke for the letter 'i' in Gandhi.

New Delhi  
18 January 1972

Chairman  
Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund



## EDITORIAL NOTE

The period from 26 October 1950 to 28 February 1951, covered by this volume, was dominated by developments in Korea, Tibet and Nepal. The threat of Chinese intervention in Korea materialized and Nehru's efforts were directed to preventing escalation into a larger war. The occupation of Tibet by Chinese forces did not assist Nehru's policy of strengthening the forces making for peace and damaged China's image in the world. In Nepal a constitutional crisis was defused by India's support for the King against the Rana regime. These efforts did not add to Nehru's popularity in the United States and there was a hardening of the Anglo-American stance on Kashmir. But Nehru stood firm on this issue.

Food remained the foremost domestic problem and Nehru urged self-sufficiency through greater production. Progress in scientific research was maintained with the opening of new laboratories. The crisis within the Congress Party also demanded much attention. The whole scene was clouded by the death of Vallabhbhai Patel on 15 December 1950.

The Nehru Memorial Library has been good enough to provide access to the papers of Jawaharlal Nehru and other relevant collections. Shrimati Indira Gandhi made available to us documents in her possession and these papers have been referred to in the footnotes as the J.N. Collection. The Prime Minister's Secretariat and the Ministries of Home and External Affairs have authorized the reprinting of material in their possession. Much of it is classified and some portions of it have necessarily had to be deleted. An article published in *Shankar's Weekly* and two items in the volumes of *Foreign Relations of the United States* for the years 1950 and 1951 have been included.

The biographical footnotes covered in the earlier volumes of the *Selected Works* have been mentioned in the index with the volume number.



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## ABBREVIATIONS

A.I.C.C.	All India Congress Committee
A.I.R.	All India Radio
B.B.C.	British Broadcasting Corporation
C-in-C	Commander-in-Chief
C.P.	Central Provinces
C.P.I.	Communist Party of India
C.P.I.(M)	Communist Party of India (Marxist)
H.M.G.	His Majesty's Government
I.A.F.	Indian Air Force
I.C.S.	Indian Civil Service
I.N.A.	Indian National Airways
I. & S.	Ministry of Industry and Supply
M.A.	Master of Arts
M.E.A.	Ministry of External Affairs
M.H.A.	Ministry of Home Affairs
M.L.A.	Member of Legislative Assembly
M.P.	Member of Parliament
N.A.T.O.	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
N.M.M.L.	Nehru Memorial Museum and Library
P.C.C.	Provincial Congress Committee
Pepsu	Patiala and East Punjab States Union
P.M.S.	Prime Minister's Secretariat
P.P.S.	Principal Private Secretary
P.R.	Proportional Representation
P.S.	Police Station
P.T.I.	Press Trust of India
P.W.D.	Public Works Department
R.A.F.	Royal Air Force
R.A.S.	Rajasthan Administrative Service
S.D.O.	Sub-Divisional Officer
S.G.	Secretary-General
U.K.	United Kingdom
U.N.C.I.P.	United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan
U.N.C.O.K.	United Nations Commission on Korea
U.N.C.U.R.K.	United Nations Commission for Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea
U.N.I.C.E.F.	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
U.N.O./U.N.	United Nations Organisation
U.P.	Uttar Pradesh
U.S.A./U.S.	United States of America
U.S.S.R	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
W.H.O.	World Health Organisation



# NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

## I. The General Approach





## 1. Building a New India<sup>1</sup>

Sisters and Brothers,

I have come to Jamshedpur after eleven years. I had certainly not forgotten Jamshedpur and its people or its workers. I do not know how often you may have thought about me. In the last two days since I came here, I have met many people and have felt your love and affection for me, which shows that you have also not forgotten me. At the same time, I am a little troubled too as to how I am going to repay you for giving me a place in your hearts. How can I serve you and the country? How am I to bear this great responsibility? You have bestowed a very great honour upon me, not by making me the Prime Minister of this great country — though that too is a great honour as it is one of the great positions of the world — but by giving me your love and respect and your faith and pinning your hopes on me. Often doubt arises in my mind as to how worthy I am of the love that the people of India have for me and how far I shall be able to fulfil the hopes that they have of me. Then I feel that let alone me, no man can really be worthy of such love, nor can I fulfil their tremendous hopes on my own unless the people themselves are prepared to share those burdens.

The task of building our country is a gigantic and extremely difficult one, especially with a population of forty or forty-five crores. Difficulties are multiplying all over the world and in India. Therefore we have to approach these questions with a calm mind as to what steps should be taken. If you and I who are responsible for running the country's affairs today do not understand one another, do not have faith in each other and do not comprehend our mutual problems and miseries, then the work cannot progress smoothly. However powerful a government may be, either in Delhi or in the States, whatever great efforts it may make, it cannot go very far without the cooperation and understanding of the people.

As I was saying, in what capacity do I stand in front of you just now? I am here in various capacities and it is difficult to separate them. I am not here in my capacity as the Prime Minister of India, not even in my capacity as a leader of India because you have made me so out of your love for me. I want that whenever there is an opportunity I should be able to talk to the people of India as I would to a brother or a colleague or even to travellers on a journey together. That is how I wish to talk to you and want you to look upon me and talk to me whenever there is an opportunity. If we do not learn to march in

1. Speech at a public meeting, Jamshedpur, 26 November 1950. From A.I.R. tapes, N.M.M.L. Original in Hindi. Extracts.

step in this long journey and try to put obstacles in one another's way, it becomes difficult to complete the journey.

As I told you I have come to Jamshedpur after eleven and a half years. In these eleven years, Jamshedpur has grown into a big city. Many new things have come up. I came here today for a specific purpose. You may have seen the huge new building which has come up.<sup>2</sup> That is a laboratory where our young people will do work in science and try to discover new things for the good of the country, to increase production, etc. So I have come all the way here — I would have liked to come to Jamshedpur anyhow — for this special task. There are many ways in which we can serve the country. But ultimately, the fundamental way to work for the benefit of the country is only through science and we have to be quite clear about that.

Why did our country become backward when the others were marching ahead? The United States of America and the European countries made great progress and became very wealthy. The common people there are much better off than here not because they extended their empire and plundered the wealth of other countries. You can take on only as much of a burden as your strength will bear. You cannot take on more by making a noise about it. If you want to run a mile, it takes you a certain amount of time — whether it be four minutes or five — to do it. You cannot run faster than your strength will permit. Similarly a country's progress depends on its strength. Yes, we can achieve a great deal within those limits — both good and bad. If what we do is bad, we will cause harm. If we cheat one another, a few individuals may pocket all the wealth of the nation, but the masses will suffer. All this is true. But ultimately the broad thing is to see where the country's strength lies and that implies the quality of the people — are they intelligent, well-trained, skilful and resourceful or not? Are they capable of working in mutual cooperation and harmony or not? All these things count because they contribute to the strength of a nation and its people. We may pass laws — and good laws are certainly beneficial — but we cannot go very far with them unless the people are trained.

So I have come here after eleven years and a great deal has happened in these eleven years in our country and in the world. You can imagine what great changes have come over the world. A great big war took place and went on for five to six years. It brought in its wake the downfall of great empires, the birth of new countries, revolution and what not all over the world. Well, anyhow, some countries emerged victorious in that war and some others were completely ruined. Take Germany and Japan for instance, both great countries with tremendous courage and strength and capable of great sacrifices. They

2. Nehru inaugurated the National Metallurgical Laboratory at Jamshedpur on 26 November 1950. For his inaugural address, see *post*, pp. 73-76.



lay in total ruin after the war. I felt then as I do now that there were many good points in them but they were following a totally wrong path — the path of imperialism. They wished to dominate and conquer others with the might of their arms. And yet, in spite of their huge and brave armies, they lost. Ultimately, behind every army, however great and powerful it may be, a different kind of strength is necessary.

What has happened in our country in the last eleven years? As you know, a new type of war was begun in our country nearly thirty years ago under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi and there have been many ups and downs in this period. We were sometimes weak and so we stumbled and fell. But we got up again and went forward and ultimately we succeeded in getting freedom by following the path shown by Mahatma Gandhi. The country became free but our task was certainly not over. Our task was the uplift of the people for which we had great big plans. We had made those plans for everyone—the kisan, the zamindar, the worker and the labourer. We wanted that there should be rapid development of the country, there should be no unemployment, there should be plenty for everyone to eat, houses to live in and clothes to wear, good education for the children. We wanted to put these plans into operation for the good of the country.

There are a great many of you workers here in the Tata factory.<sup>3</sup> There are many other factories in the country but none as large as this one. But everyone wants, and rightly so, that their problems should be solved, opportunities for progress should increase and that their children should be well educated and become better off. That is no doubt right. Everyone should get these opportunities. But after all how far can a country go? It can go only so far as its will carries it. It can spend only as much as it has. It cannot spend more than that. If a country wants to make rapid progress, it has to make an effort to produce more wealth. What is wealth? If you think about it, money is certainly wealth but it is also an instrument of trade. Ultimately the wealth of a nation is what is produced every year in the country, from the land or factories or small-scale industries or whatever it is. Whatever is produced in a year is its wealth for that year and it is from that that the expenditure on food, clothing, etc., is met. Now no country can spend more than it produces. If it spends more, it will go bankrupt in a short while. What applies to a family applies to the country too. A country's wealth consists of all that we produce by our own hard work. I am not referring to the wealth which is in the government treasury, but to what the people produce with their hard work in a year. That is the real wealth of a country. So a country can spend only as much as it produces, not more. Occasionally, what is left over from the previous year or some fresh loans can help. But loans have to be repaid. So the spending power and the capacity of a nation depend entirely on what it can produce. America is a very wealthy country because it produces vast amounts from its factories, etc. Take

3. Tata Iron and Steel Works.

land, for instance. Leave alone the United States, take Japan or any other country. We do not produce even half or one fourth of what they produce from one acre of land. Their land is the same as ours. But they manage to produce twice or thrice of what we do by such methods as using better fertilizers and tractors. Therefore their wealth from the land is doubled or trebled. Then they produce a great deal in their factories which also means wealth because money alone is not real wealth. Goods produced are the real wealth. They sell their goods to the rest of the world and earn money. So the people of the United States are a hundred times wealthier than us because they produce much more than us.

So the question before us is to increase our capacity to produce wealth. How are we to go about it? We have to increase the capacity of our land and our factories. We need water and irrigation facilities for our land. So we made big plans. You may have heard of the Damodar Valley Scheme and the schemes on the Kosi, the Hirakud and the Mahanadi and in Bhakra in the Punjab, and other schemes in Madras and Bombay. We have drawn up plans to arrest the waters from our great rivers from the Himalayas which flow away into the ocean and thus prevent the energy potential of these waters being wasted. How are we to utilize those waters? It is a strange situation. All the waters of the Ganga and the Yamuna flow away into the sea and the lands in Bihar remain parched. The water is there but it is not being used and goes waste. How are we to harness this energy? Heavy rains resulting in floods also bring ruin in their wake. Therefore we had to do something to ensure that the water is not wasted but conserved so that it can be used in times of need. So we made these plans and have started the work. Then we have made other plans for starting more industries and factories all over the country. We have a big steel plant here which is of great use to the country. But it does not produce enough steel for the country's needs. We have to buy from other countries and, as you know, steel is needed for a great many things. So we decided to put up a steel plant. We decided to produce other things, too, to increase the production from land — the things which we have to buy from other countries. If we started producing them, it would be a great help. Our money will remain in the country and it will put an end to unemployment leading to the welfare of the people. So we planned for all this. The work has begun in certain places. But though we made large plans in our enthusiasm, and there was an urgency to get things done, we found that it was not so easy to do everything at once. The World War had dealt a big blow to our economy — not only to ours but to all the economies of the world. A great deal of our country's wealth had been squandered in that war and we did not have enough. You may have heard of the great Bengal famine which occurred five or six years ago during war-time and millions of people died. Why? It was because the war had put a lot of burden on our resources.



So when we came to power, we started with the great burden of inflation which had to be controlled. Then again, during the war years, the expenditure was not strictly controlled and a great deal of money was squandered. This prompted dishonest practices, corruption and blackmarketing. People evaded paying income tax and started maintaining dual accounts and kept much of their profits underground. In short, the entire system of trade was corrupted with all these evils, and at a time when the country was broken up into two and Pakistan was created such a situation came which added to our problems as well as those of Pakistan. Then you may remember the horrible events which followed, both in Pakistan and in East Punjab, Delhi and other States of our country — killing, looting, arson—the memory of which makes us hang our heads in shame and grief that human beings should have been capable of such barbarities. What was the result? Millions of people fled from both sides, leaving all their possessions and belongings behind. So we had to undertake the task of looking after them and finding ways of rehabilitating them. In a country already teeming with the unemployed, it was a tremendous burden to find employment for these additional millions. We have had shortage of food and other things and a great deal of money had to be spent on importing foodgrains. So all our plans had to be slowed down to a large extent due to these various reasons, because we simply did not have the resources to carry on with them. We did not want our country to go bankrupt, which would have been very harmful. So we had to stop most of our work though very reluctantly. Work on only a few of the schemes is going on at the moment. Those are the essential things without which our country cannot go on.

I have put all these difficulties before you so that you can also understand what is going on. You have to think about these things and find ways of solving these problems. It is no use blaming the Government for everything or to think that if you pass resolutions and the Government makes laws, all your ills will be removed. No problem can be solved by such methods. We have to produce more.... Germany and Japan lost badly in the war and were ruined. But within five to six years, they are back on their feet because they have an innate strength in them. Now how much strength do we have? It is true that we got freedom. But thereafter what are we capable of doing? This is the question which the world asks of India today.

Many people think that now that we have achieved independence, there is no need for us to do any work and everything should come to us automatically. This is very foolish and quite impossible. Others feel that agitation and slogan-mongering can work wonders. Agitations may be good in their place and voices must be raised against evil. But if the whole country does nothing but leads agitations, then the country will be ruined. A country makes progress by hard work. The more we work and produce and increase the country's wealth and strength, the more will our share of all that be. Otherwise it cannot go on. This



is a broad fact to be understood. If our farmers stop working and hold meetings instead or take out processions and join agitations, then they will have nothing to eat and neither shall we.

It is possible that the Government in Delhi or here may make many mistakes. You must think and consider how to rectify them. You have the right to criticize and I invite you to tell us what you think is wrong. An independent Government, what is known as a democratic Government, cannot function if people keep quiet. A king or a ruler cannot do what he likes regardless of the people's wishes for very long. It is important in an independent country for the people to understand everything. After all you are the ones who elect the Government. You must exercise your franchise with due care and elect a Government which in your opinion has the right policy and principles and which will work. So you must think about these matters and even otherwise you must express your opinions freely and forcefully about all matters. This is how the strength of the entire people can be harnessed to the work of the nation in which all of you have to cooperate. You must not think of all this as mere official work. These are some of the wrong traditions established during British rule. We could not do very much then—most of the work was done by Government offices. But now we can no longer think that the work should be done by Government offices and that we have nothing to do except to hold meetings sometimes. Independent countries cannot function in this way.

It is obvious that freedom is a great thing—we fought for it and it gives you certain rights. But you must remember that any right that you get entails certain responsibilities too and if you do not recognize them or are unable to fulfil them, then your rights will be snatched away from you, just as a nation which does not understand its responsibilities cannot retain its freedom for very long—it is snatched away and the country becomes weak. Therefore each individual, man, woman and child, has to understand the responsibilities which freedom entails. They must be constantly aware of them and especially just now, when the whole world is in a mess, there is talk of war and there are small feuds raging. No one knows when the whole world will go up in flames. What will we do then? Are we going to be engrossed in our internal squabbles and mutual recriminations and slogan-mongering and in taking out processions? When the world is in turmoil, taking out processions will not help us. We will have to be tough to be able to face it and we must be prepared now. In the dangerous world of today, the country which is weak and foolish cannot survive. Therefore we have to be very vigilant. If we are vigilant, even if we make mistakes or take a wrong step, it does not matter very much because we will be able to control the situation. But if we are not strong and vigilant, then even right action will not benefit us because without strength and cooperation, even right would become wrong. I am putting a very fundamental fact before you.

I talked about the possibility of war—it will be unfortunate if there is war in the world, but it will have to be faced. But you and I have to wage quite a different kind of war, not with an external enemy, but with our own weaknesses and misfortunes. A terrible thing happened in Bihar in the last two to three months. The entire crop was ruined. It was a terrible disaster, not only for our farmers, but for all of us. The more important question was, what to do about the next crop? What were we to do? We could not sit idle. During British rule, if there was famine, people died like flies. But that sort of thing can no longer be tolerated. It is our duty to face these things. If necessary, we will import food. But please remember that there are food shortages all over the world. It is not easy to import food and even if we manage to do so, it is at an exorbitant price. We are a poor country and cannot afford to pay much. Still, we will import some food. But ultimately this is a problem that only we ourselves can solve, by hard work and by not giving in to panic. There is no point in merely complaining about it or blaming the Government or others. The people of Bihar will have to face the problem and solve it and the whole country will help them.

In the last twenty-five to thirty years, Mahatma Gandhi taught us many things and though we often forgot to follow them or were led astray because we were weak, we tried to do our best and as a result we achieved independence. Now the surprising thing is that the world now accepts the stamp of Mahatma Gandhi on us and regards him with great respect, but we in India are beginning to forget him. We often take his name and sing his praises. But we are beginning to forget his work and his instructions and his principles and the path that he showed us. It is a sad thing that the last days of Mahatma Gandhi were very troubled and full of sorrow. Why? It was because wherever he looked, he could see that the people of India were forgetting the lessons taught by him and before his own eyes communal riots between Hindus and Muslims took place in Delhi and elsewhere. There was no question of Hindus and Muslims fighting one another at that time. Hindus were killed in Pakistan and Muslims in India. It was not even a regular war. All this happened before his own eyes. So you can imagine what a deep hurt it was to his heart to see the work of seventy to eighty years crumbling away. Ultimately, a citizen of this country shot him dead. Well, it was a very sad thing, but actually it was not the bullet from the Indian youth's gun, but the actions of our brethren which killed him. The bullet was just an instrument which ended his life.

So we have to consider what course of action we are going to follow, because so long as we are not clear in our minds about that, we shall wander aimlessly. There is no point in blaming one another. You in this city of Jamshedpur especially ought to give this matter serious thought because Jamshedpur is a modern Indian city. I have seen it grow in front of my eyes. Jamshedpur is the India of today and, if I may say so, of tomorrow and of the future. So when



I come to Jamshedpur I see what India will look like in the future and what can be done. I do not mean to say that I want huge chimneys all over India belching out smoke. But I do want that India should have a great many industries, big and small, which will make us strong and self-sufficient and increase our capacity to produce more.

There is yet another thing about Jamshedpur. You are assembled here in lakhs. Where have you come from? You have come from all parts of the country—I think perhaps there is no part which is not represented here. So in a sense Jamshedpur is a miniature India. All castes and creeds are represented here by people from all the States. It is a great thing in itself that all of you come together and are able to live and work together in harmony and understand one another so well. Believe me, no external power can do us any harm or subjugate us ultimately. If we fall, it is because of our own weaknesses and, as you know, the worst of them is disunity. Individuals fight with their neighbours, each caste fights with the other, people of one province fight with the people of other provinces or people of one religion fight with people of other religions. All of us live in compartments and build barriers which separate us and weaken us. People forget the basic lesson which Mahatma Gandhi taught us to keep us together and to make us strong. The moment we learnt to work together under his guidance, we forgot the province or religion to which we belonged. In short, we forgot about the barriers which separated us in the past. We worked together and proportionately our strength increased and that strength will be maintained so long as we remember that lesson.

The greatest defect in us stems from our caste system. There are innumerable castes among us — Bhumihars, Kayasthas, Rajputs. I cannot even remember all the names properly, but there are so many of them. Even during elections, they come to the fore. In this respect, I think Bihar's position is the worst in the entire country. Each caste fights with the others, whether it is in the Congress Committee or elsewhere. It is a strange situation. All this weakens Bihar and brings it into disrepute. So, first of all, we must remember not to follow communal policies. Please remember that this was the first lesson taught to us by Mahatma Gandhi. You must also remember that the creation of Pakistan was brought about by communalism. It was that principle that they followed but that does not mean that we have to forget or give up our own principles. You may say that the Muslim League was successful in that it managed to divide the country and Pakistan was formed as a result of their efforts. But then real victory would have been if our country had also followed the path of communalism. It will then be our total defeat and we shall be proved worthless. We shall be neither here nor there. Therefore we have to shun the path of communalism and realize that all the people who live in this country—to whatever religion, State or caste they might belong—have to share the burdens of independent India together. This is the first thing that we have to remember. Everything

else is secondary. There are interminable discussions about communism and socialism. These discussions are all very well but they have to take second place. The basic thing that you have to understand is that the people of India have to live together in friendship and amity, irrespective of caste, province or creed. If this is not understood, then everything else becomes meaningless....

So I want you to think about these larger issues. What is the situation in India today? How are we to conduct ourselves and maintain unity and harmony? Please remember that India will progress only as much as her strength will permit and no more.... Now, as you know, there is often tension between big factory-owners and the workers. Often there are strikes. What should be done about that? For a long time, for over a hundred years or so, ever since these big factories were started, the working class suffered great injustice. Gradually they formed trade unions because no single individual can fight against these evils. Their strength grew and gradually they began to get protection and their condition became better. This is how it happened in Europe and America. The same story started in our country too and is progressing. There is no doubt that in many places the workers have been treated very badly and unjustly. And it is also true that they need the weapon of strike. Otherwise what are they to do? But the best of weapons is apt to be used too frequently and its edges become blunt. If you have a knife, you can do a thousand things with it at home or you can cut your neighbour's throat with it. The knife cannot be blamed for-that. We must think about these matters.

Recently there was a big strike in Bombay in the textile mills,<sup>4</sup> as you know. I shall not go into the whole story of why it happened and who was to blame. It is obvious that when nearly a hundred thousand workers go on strike there is a certain amount of difficulty. It is obvious that public sympathy lies with them. But at the same time, if you consider, as a result of the strike, the production of cloth which was very necessary went down and we had to stop our exports which meant a great loss to the country. The coffers of the country — I am not talking about the government treasury — were fast dwindling. Production of cloth went down, money was scarce and ultimately the paying capacity of the nation became less. Therefore, on the one hand, it is an accepted fact that the weapon of strike is a very essential one in the hands of the workers to protect themselves against the injustice of the mill-owners. On the other hand, the use of this weapon, in the situation that prevails today in our country, is like cutting off the nose to spite our face. It weakens the country and impoverishes the working class. So what is the solution? For one thing, it should be used very circumspectly. Nowadays especially, it should not be resorted to unless it is absolutely essential. Secondly, whenever there is a dispute, there should be mutual discussions to arrive at an amicable settlement. These are the

4. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 56-58.



only two possible approaches. Otherwise the country will be absolutely ruined gradually by these internal disputes, production will go down, there will be less and less to eat and gradually whatever big tasks we wish to undertake will remain undone.

... I shall say one thing more very briefly and finish. That is about the condition of the Congress today. As you know, it is not in good shape. I have said it and others have said it too. Some of our old colleagues who had worked in the Congress for more than thirty years have left it. Others have not left it but they have formed a dissident group within the Congress.<sup>5</sup> What is to be done in such a situation? Well, it is a very big question. What can I say? But I shall mention two or three points. One is that whenever an old colleague leaves us, it pains us greatly, firstly because of the parting with a colleague and secondly because after twenty-five or thirty years of service and sacrifice in the freedom struggle, an individual leaves the organization as he sees defects creeping in. What are our weaknesses and shortcomings? It is not enough for me to criticize others. It is possible that the others may do wrong. But I must search my heart for the shortcomings in me and my work which my colleagues disapprove of. This is something to be considered deeply. There is no point in our criticizing one another. As I said, we must learn to work together. If Congressmen are incapable of maintaining unity and internal dissensions creep in, then this huge organization that we have built up, which took on the responsibility of fighting for India's freedom, will become useless and weak. We have to search our hearts to discover the reasons for our colleagues leaving. We must make them understand and try to understand the reasons ourselves.

One more thing comes to my mind. I would like to say a few words about Nepal. You may have heard that less than a month ago, we had long talks with Nepal.<sup>6</sup> Now, Nepal is a fully independent country except for the fact that till recently there has been a great deal of British influence on Nepal and much of their administration was guided by them. But British rule is over and we have told Nepal right from the beginning that we respect its independence and wish it to continue to be completely free. We have no desire to interfere in the affairs of Nepal. Geographically Nepal is very close to India. Even otherwise, it has very close links with India—religious, cultural and historical. But geographically we are so close that we cannot escape each other. Let me tell you one broad fact. If anyone wishes to go out of Nepal, he has only two routes — one through Tibet and the other through India. There is no other way. We want Nepal to be an independent country but we must remember that Nepal cannot escape having a very close relationship with India because of its geographic contiguity. Whatever happens in Nepal is bound to affect us. No

5. See *post*, pp. 110 and 119.

6. See *post*, Section 12.

other country can be so deeply interested in Nepal as we are. It is true that the British took a deep interest but ever since they left India, their interest has become remote. The United States, France, China or some other countries might be interested in Nepal but our interest stems from our close proximity and no other country can have such a close relationship with Nepal as we do. So it is obvious that though we do not wish to interfere in their affairs, we cannot stand aside and watch silently if things go wrong. It is also obvious that when we fought for our freedom, it was not merely to remove the British from here but also to have democratic rule here. We want that there should be democracy all over Asia and Africa. We also want that whatever else happens in Nepal, the people must get more power. We have often advised them, not because we wish to interfere but because it is in Nepal's interest as also in the interests of India and the world. We feel that if this does not happen, there will be trouble in Nepal, perhaps even bloodshed, which will weaken Nepal, of course, but will also affect our country. We are surrounded by big Powers and if a country on our borders is weak, then naturally we too become weak. Therefore we are deeply interested in what happened in Nepal. You may have heard that the King of Nepal—I will not call him 'Raja' because others are called 'Raja' too and it is a little muddling—came to our Ambassador's house in Kathmandu in a state of perturbation and asked for asylum. It was obvious that we could not refuse, especially as he was their King. Then he came to Delhi and is here these days. We welcomed him and extended hospitality as to an honoured guest. Other things have happened in the meanwhile in Nepal. A day or so after he came, the Council of Ministers in Nepal proclaimed his three-year old grandson as their King, though the old King had not abdicated or done anything of the kind. This complicated matters still further. You may have heard that a large number of Nepalese rebelled against their Government and attacked some areas close to Nepal's borders with Bihar; they even captured for some days Birganj, a big town of Nepal. We have been thinking about these matters. We have always had deep sympathy for the democratic aspirations of the people. On the other hand, we do not wish to interfere in Nepal's affairs. We do not want to give room for talk that we are using force. There have been complaints from both sides. Now the question before us is what we should do. We are quite clear in our minds about these issues and we have taken certain decisions too, but as it is an international matter, we do not want to say anything finally, without consulting the other countries, whatever we may have decided. The King continues to be in Delhi and we continue to accord him his old position. I cannot say very much about this Nepal affair, because it would be irresponsible in my capacity as the Foreign Minister. I have a great responsibility in the matter. But I would like to say only that our views are quite clear on the subject and our decisions will be such as will be acceptable to our people. *Jai Hind.*



## 2. Into the Second Half of the Twentieth Century<sup>1</sup>

Friends and Comrades,

Within a few hours from now, this year will pass away, and the half century will also end. We stand, as it were, on the edge of the line that divides the first half of the twentieth century from the second. This first half has been full of wars and tumults and of vast changes—political, scientific, cultural, social and economic. We have seen great revolutions which have changed the face of many countries. The world is a very different place today, even from what it was in my early boyhood days. This half century is over, but it has brought no peace to us or promise even of future peace, and as we stand on this New Year's eve, on the sword's edge of the present, darkness seems to envelop the future.

I am addressing you after a long interval and much has happened since I spoke to you last on the radio.<sup>2</sup> Many calamities have befallen us, bringing distress to our people. But the greatest of these calamities and sorrows has been the passing away from amongst us of a giant among men.<sup>3</sup> Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was a dear and valued comrade in the brave days of our struggle for freedom, full of wisdom and determination, a rock of patient strength, to whom instinctively all of us went for guidance. Later, when we occupied the seats of government, inevitably some of the heaviest burdens fell on him and history will record how he discharged that duty. His name will always be remembered, not only as that of a great leader in the fight for freedom, but also as a great builder, unifier and consolidator of new India. That is a proud title to fame which he well deserved. For him it is well for his life's duty was well performed and is done, but for us it is not well, for we miss that strength and that wisdom and we can no longer go to him for counsel and advice. That burden which his broad shoulders carried so lightly has now to be shared by all of us.

Tomorrow morning, as the sun of the New Year comes out, I shall leave Delhi on my way to the West. I shall pay a brief visit to Bangalore to open the Science Congress there,<sup>4</sup> and then proceed to Bombay and England, where the Commonwealth Prime Ministers are going to meet in conference. I am leaving

1. Broadcast to the nation from All India Radio, Delhi, 31 December 1950. From A.I.R. tapes, N.M.M.L.
2. On 9 September 1950. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 166–170.
3. Vallabhbhai Patel died on 15 December 1950 in Bombay.
4. See *post*, pp. 76–84.

India reluctantly, for I want to face our problems here, and to give all my strength and energy in search of their solution. I do not wish to escape even for a while from the burden and the responsibility that Fate has cast upon me, but after full consideration I have decided to attend this conference in London. Big issues are at stake in the world today and, indeed, the fate of humanity itself hangs in the balance. I do not suggest that the London Conference will decide any of these issues or will finally avert the grave danger of war that confronts us. But it is possible that this Conference may help in lessening the gloom somewhat and in showing a way which might lead to peace. In this grave emergency, therefore, I have thought it necessary to travel to London and to take counsel there with others, who have also to shoulder heavy burdens, and who are trying to find some light in the prevailing darkness. If we take even a small step in the right direction, then the Conference will have done well.

You know how India has laboured with all earnestness of purpose in the cause of peace. We have sometimes been misunderstood by our friends, but I think it is widely realised now that the dominant urge that governs our actions is the desire to help in the maintenance of peace in this world. Everybody knows that large-scale war today is horrible beyond words and that its consequences will be appalling. It may even bring about the ruin of the proud structure of modern civilisation. The small war that has been going on in Korea has already devastated that unfortunate country and brought untold misery on its people. And yet people fight, they say, to bring freedom to the people of Korea.

Peace cannot be purchased by compromise with evil or by surrender to it. Nor can peace be maintained by methods that themselves are the negation of peace. During our long struggle for freedom, we never surrendered and we did not compromise at any time with what we considered evil. Yet under Gandhiji's guidance we tried to follow the method of peace and were friendly even to those who tried to crush us. That was the method of peaceful but unyielding approach. That was the temper of peace even in a struggle.

Today we talk of peace, but if we do so, sometimes people mistake it for appeasement of evil. That temper of peace is completely absent today and the only alternative to a surrender appears to many people to be war with all its terrible consequences. Surely, there are other alternatives which are far removed from surrender and yet lead to the objective aimed at. It is in this spirit that we have tried to approach the world's problems. We are not pacifist. We keep an army and a navy and an air force and if danger threatens us we shall use them. But we seek no dominion over other people. Our sole object is to be left in peace ourselves to solve our own problems, and where possible to help and cooperate with others. In doing so we try not to be swept away by passion and danger and to maintain that temper of peaceful approach. It is in this spirit and



with all humility and carefulness that I have endeavoured to guide India's policy in the present juncture. I have done so in the belief that I have the trust and goodwill of my countrymen behind me. That has fortified me and given me strength, even when the outlook was very dark.

In our own country there is a multitude of problems. The first of these is that of food. You know that we have had an unparalleled series of natural disasters and calamities during the last six months. The fates have been most unkind to us. Perhaps they wanted to test us to the uttermost. We will survive that test, for something of the old courage and determination is in us still, and whether danger threatens us from within or without, we shall face it calmly and unflinchingly, remembering always the great Master who led us to freedom.

We are trying to get food from all over the world, wherever it may be available. We will make every possible effort to fight starvation and famine. If we cannot get enough food from abroad to meet all our needs, then the entire country and all the people must evenly face the problem of food shortage. We cannot tolerate that there should be an abundance in one part and starvation in another. If we spread out this burden and all of us share it, then we may well pass this critical period of the next few months. Therefore, let us come to grips with this problem in all earnestness and determination. Let there be no waste. Let there be no selfish hoarding. Let no man shift for himself at the cost of his neighbour. It is a common peril that faces us, and we can only meet it together as comrades helping each other and thus lightening each other's distress. We have a hard time ahead. We will not escape it by running away from it, or by blaming others or by futile argument.

Some people suggest to us to get rid of our commitments by putting an end to food rationing over large areas. That would be an easy way of escape for governments but that would also be a criminal escape from the duty and responsibility that we owe to our people. We do not like rationing and controls, and we should like to get rid of them as soon as possible. But at a time of great scarcity, we cannot afford to see our people starve and to make the excuse that we are not responsible. The only way to meet this is by a common sharing of what we have and a common lack of what we have not.

Both the international and national situation are a challenge to us and to our manhood. How are we going to stand up to this challenge? Not by slogan and resolution, not by mutual bickering, not by feeling despondent and helpless, but rather by putting aside our petty conflicts and differences and pulling together and pooling our resources and facing the world as a united nation, determined to overcome all obstacles that come in its way.

As Prime Minister, I am the servant of all our people and I can make no distinction. But I have another capacity also which I treasure. I am a Congressman, a member for the last thirty-eight years of a great organisation, which fought a mighty empire and brought freedom to this country. During this long period

of years, in common with innumerable countrymen of mine, it has been my proud privilege to work through this Congress organisation for the freedom of India and the welfare of our people. With the coming of independence a great responsibility came to all Congressmen. That responsibility was not merely to occupy the seats of authority but rather to keep the old flame alive in ourselves and in our people, to continue to serve to the best of our capacity and to remember always the lessons that our Master taught us. How have we discharged that responsibility? I fear that we cannot claim great success. But this is no time for us to criticise and find fault with each other. We have to get back to our old moorings and put an end to all disruptive and fissiparous tendencies in the Congress and in the country. That was our aim and objective several decades ago. For that we laboured throughout this period and a large measure of success came to us. Today the same call comes to us, and we must listen to it and act in accordance with it. That means that we seek no power or profit for ourselves, but only endeavour to serve our people; that we seek the cooperation of all others and avoid everything that weakens and disrupts. If remembering the inspiration of our great Master we act on these lines then the fears that fill our minds and the difficulties that surround us will fade away.

So on this eve of the New Year, and a new half century, I make earnest appeal to you, men and women of India, let us make this new year a turning point in our national life; let us make a fresh start and light again that old flame in our hearts which warmed us when the struggle was the fiercest. Let us, above all, cooperate with each other in the service of India.

Friends and comrades, I ask you for your good wishes and blessings in this new lap of life's journey that begins with the New Year, in which we are all fellow-travellers marching to a common goal. *Jai Hind*.

### 3. Greater Production the First Task<sup>1</sup>

... In the world of today, we must look more towards ourselves and less towards other countries. We want to have friendly relations with other countries. But if we cannot stand on our feet by our own efforts, hard work and labour, we cannot survive on others' help either. There is the question of food which is causing great hardship in the country. We have got large quantities of food from outside.<sup>2</sup> But ultimately if we are not able to produce enough food in the

1. Speech at a public meeting, Ahmedabad, 30 January 1951. A.I.R. tapes, N.M.M.L. Original in Hindi. Extracts.
2. In 1949, 3.7 million tons of food worth Rs 144.6 crores was imported and, in 1950, 2.1 million tons of food costing Rs 79.8 crores was imported.



country, we will find ourselves in great difficulties. This problem has been discussed over and over again in the last two to three years. So, when I see a grand gathering like this one, I think how easy it would be for us if we once made up our minds to do something. But somehow we are forgetting the habit of working together. I remember a time when we used to come here to Sabarmati quite often, twenty-five, thirty years ago, to consult Mahatma Gandhi and to seek his advice and whenever we came here, the talk would be of big issues, of satyagraha and our course of action against the British Government or about some constructive programme. We did not indulge in futile talk or long lectures. The talks were business-like and then we would go out to work. Now the talk is less to do with work and more about quarrels and squabbles, for people think that it is the duty of the Government to do everything. So in a way, our habit of working together is growing less, and this weakens the nation a great deal because, after all, a country marches ahead only on the work done by its people.

We have achieved independence, political independence, but that has not solved our other problems. We want that there should be economic progress. We want many things to happen in the country but they cannot be done by the government alone. If we want to make economic progress, it means producing more wealth. Wealth can be produced by the work done by the people, the farmers, the labourers and other artisans. What is produced by everyone working together constitutes the wealth of the country. The country can spend only as much as it produces. No law can increase the wealth of a country. Yes, you may borrow from other countries—that is a different matter. The United States is a rich country. Why is it rich? It is rich because the United States produces a tremendous amount of goods very rapidly. The more we produce in our country, the more wealthy we shall become. Then there is the problem of equitable distribution of the wealth among the people. It should not find its way into a few pockets. But, first of all, we have to produce wealth by hard work. If you take the rate of production anywhere in the world, whether in Egypt or China or any other country, ours is much lower. If we produced as much as China or Egypt produce from their land, our country's income would be doubled. Why is it that we are unable to produce more? It is not the fault of our farmers....

Now, as you know, there is yet another problem. With the gradual increase in production, our population is also increasing very rapidly.<sup>3</sup> The more we produce, the more mouths there are to feed. So the increase in production does not help very much. Either we have to increase the production a great deal more to feed the population or try to curb the growth in population. What is

3. The total population of India increased by 13.4 per cent during 1941–1951.

to be done? You may laugh, but this is no laughing matter. It is a very important matter. Every year our population is going up by millions. So our production is just able to keep pace with the increasing population. Nothing is left over. How are we to make progress? The rate of progress has to be so rapid that the growth in population should not make a difference. How is that to be done? Development can take place only on savings which we can invest in factories or plants or land or fertilizers or such things. But we need to save in order to undertake developmental activities. We cannot save anything in our country—a few individuals may be able to save, but I am talking about the country as a whole. So development gets retarded. How are the poor people to save when they do not have enough to make both ends meet, when they do not get enough for food or for clothes, housing, and such necessities? So the greatest problem in our country is that most people do not earn enough to be able to save and development is slow.

... So this is the situation in our country. If you look elsewhere, there is talk of war; and if there is war, we may be able to keep out of it—we shall make every effort to do so—but we will certainly be affected by it. We must be prepared for that eventuality—and not give in to panic or fear but face the consequences with strength. Again we come back to the same point that in order to be strong we must be self-sufficient and produce whatever we need in the country and not depend on others for essential goods. That includes military hardware because if we are not able to produce what we need for our armed forces but have to import these goods from other countries, we may find ourselves stranded if they do not arrive in time. Our forces will be useless in that case.

... The most important problem is, I think, how to change the atmosphere in this country so that the common people are involved in the task of nation-building and all of us may be able to work together. There I sit in Delhi and of course there is a great deal of work, so much so that it becomes difficult to get out of Delhi. But the result of being stuck in Delhi is that my going out and meeting people is becoming less. My contacts are growing less which is a bad thing—it has harmed me and possibly others too because it is very essential to understand one another in this huge country and learn from one another too. If we put up these barriers, understanding becomes more difficult. So how are we, the citizens of India, going to produce an atmosphere in which to make rapid progress? Ultimately the matter is entirely in our hands. No resolutions in the A.I.C.C. or agreements with foreign countries can achieve that, though they do have some effect. I want you to consider this and read the resolutions which are being passed by the A.I.C.C. because they are fundamental resolutions and if we implement them, it will be well and if we do not, then we will have to look for other ways of running this country.... *Jai Hind*.



#### 4. Urgent Need for Economic Self-Sufficiency<sup>1</sup>

Great events have taken place both at home and abroad since my last visit to the city three months ago.<sup>2</sup> The nation has received a blow in the death of the veteran leader, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. His death is a great loss to the country, but greater still to his comrades and colleagues whose responsibilities are ever increased with the growing responsibilities and the problems of the country.

I recall my visit to the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference at London<sup>3</sup> and then to Paris, where I met the Indian diplomats in Europe.<sup>4</sup> The affairs of the world are getting more complex and more explosive day by day. India is engrossed in her own problems and wants to settle down to doing patient hard work at home rather than be involved in the affairs of the world. But then India cannot escape the impact of the world events and live in isolation. Consequently, we have shown a deep interest in the affairs of the world and with some measure of success as well. The endeavours of the country in international politics have borne some visible results, for it can be said that but for her endeavours the world situation today may have been more grave and explosive.

This, however, does not mean that the country wields a great influence on world politics. But, all the same, India tries to do her best in whatever she can. During the last two or three months, world politics has taken a turn for the worse, which is fraught with danger. All this is due to the happenings in Korea and China. The other countries have no special affection for Korea but they fear a world-wide flare up as a result of the events in Korea. Since Korea attracts world attention, India also tries to do her bit towards finding a solution and with some effect.

At the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference, a declaration was unanimously issued. However, later on the countries of the Commonwealth did not fully cooperate and India had to oppose the U.S. resolution in the United Nations branding China an aggressor.<sup>5</sup>

India did not want to oppose the stand taken by the sister nations of the Commonwealth. But she believed in certain principles and, therefore, took an emphatic stand in the United Nations. It was not fruitless and the result of all this has to be borne in mind.

1. Speech at a public meeting at Lucknow, 16 February 1951. From the *National Herald*, 17 February 1951. Extracts.
2. 3 October 1950.
3. In January 1951.
4. Nehru had called a meeting of heads of Indian missions in Europe on 18 January 1951 on his way back from London.
5. See *post*, p. 500.

I do not say that a settlement now is impossible, for I believe that we must try again and again towards that end. But it is also true that the steps taken by certain countries have practically barred the door to a settlement. However, whenever we get a chance we shall continue to strive for a settlement.

Korea is being devastated as a result of war and innocent men and women are being killed. Frantic preparations are now being made for war in the world and the people are being mentally conditioned for a future war or being worked up for it. They are facing a great hardship since money that would have otherwise been used by Governments on nation-building and welfare activities is being diverted to war preparations. One of its consequences is stockpiling, and stockpiling includes not only a number of minerals and other things but even necessities of life like food and cloth. The richer nations do most of the stockpiling by paying for purchases at higher prices than those that the poorer nations can afford. This has resulted in soaring prices and increased inflation. India is also affected by this stockpiling and armament race. Poor countries are thus the worst sufferers.

People complain about the hardships of life and they have every right to do so, but they have also to understand the effect of the international situation on India's economic life. As far as India is concerned there are certain fundamental problems which have become all the graver in view of the clouds of war looming large on the world horizon. They have to be mentally and psychologically prepared to face and also to try to escape the consequences of world events today. The first thing in this regard is that India should not be dependent on other countries for her necessities. We have to dispense with all our imported luxuries and manufacture all our necessities. Of course, total isolation from the world is impossible. But, if we remained dependent for our necessities on other countries and if by force of circumstances we cannot get those things from abroad the country would be nowhere.

Total self-sufficiency for any country in the modern world is wholly impossible but a nation has to strive to be as self-sufficient as it can. It is towards the end of maximum self-sufficiency that the Government of India is following a rigid policy in matters of import and export. The days of trial for the country are coming and the people have to be fully prepared to face them courageously and successfully. If they do not attain self-sufficiency they would be put to untold miseries and hardships.

I feel sad that the people do not fully realise the implications of the present situation and their responsibilities. For instance, in the matter of food the people do not appreciate the critical situation with which the Government is faced. Besides the ravages of war and Partition, one of the main causes of India's poor food situation is her increasing population. The number of consumers has been steadily growing irrespective of any increase in production.



The Government does not like to force a ration cut on the people. It has to do it, however, in view of the natural calamities that befell the country last year. These calamities were the worst that any country ever faced during a period of six months. By enforcing the ration cut, the Government wants all the people to share the hardships during a long period of time. The Government, besides, is trying to get food from abroad. However, food cannot be imported in unlimited quantities from abroad. The Government of India is determined to attain self-sufficiency in food by March 1952. No food will be imported thereafter except to meet situations resulting from natural calamities. There might be people who think that the self-sufficiency programme of the Government is mere talk, but I tell them that the Government is resolved to achieve it.

America is rich because she has produced 30 or even 40 times more than India has produced. This is not because as a people Americans are more intelligent than the Indians, but because their methods of production are modern and, therefore, more efficient. So old methods of production will not help India, where the agricultural yield is the lowest in the world, being about nine maunds an acre. Recently, however, in a crop competition a cultivator has produced 63 maunds of wheat in an acre. If, with better manure and care, a cultivator can increase his yield so much, surely an average cultivator with better manure and methods of cultivation can increase his yield by at least 50 per cent.

The total per capita output in India is fantastically lower than that of other countries. What is worse, the people are disinclined to work. This is in normal times a big problem for the country, but in the present situation it has become a problem of colossal magnitude. Every man has to think of it and curb this apathy to work. The big problems that stare us in the country today will be solved only when the people consciously work and cooperate for their solution. Decrees and legislation will not do much. The problems have to be solved and the Planning Commission is concentrating on them to evolve a large-scale master plan. However, I want to tell the people that the fundamental problem with which even the Planning Commission is faced is how best to secure the maximum cooperation of the people on a voluntary and non-political basis. What the Planning Commission is envisaging is to recruit a strong army of about a crore of volunteers, who will consciously work to tackle the problems on a non-political basis.

The conditions in the country will not improve unless the people are activated and are determined to work hard. We read about the achievements of other countries. All these countries make progress due to hard work. The tragedy is that in India the main progress during the last three or four years has been in matters of debates and discussions, and not in concrete work. I warn that unless we work with a single-minded determination the situation will go from bad to worse.



The Government resettled about 8,000,000 refugees from Pakistan. Individuals may still be grumbling, but the success with which the Government had rehabilitated the refugees amazed the foreign experts and observers who have visited the country.

The best help is self-help and that should be the cardinal principle of everyone's life. Also, people have to develop a sense of dignity of labour, especially manual labour. The greatest profession in the world is that of the primary producer—the man who produces the real wealth. Unfortunately, we, in this country, have developed a peculiar and perverted idea of respecting 'sinecure jobs' and think that they are the most dignified jobs. People also have a dislike or even a contempt for manual labour. These ideas are perverted and dangerous and have to be eradicated. Even in America, which is not a socialist State, manual labour is accorded respect and nobody looks down upon it. Some Indian students had gone to the United States to learn dairying with peculiar notions about the dignity of manual labour. They felt like square pegs in round holes there, when they were required to do all sorts of odd jobs themselves. In this country the prevalence of this peculiar tendency can be seen from the fact that a car-owner requires a chauffeur to drive his car, and the chauffeur requires a cleaner to clean the car every day. This may be due to human labour being available in great abundance and at a cheap cost, though it is not so cheap now as before. We should emulate the example of Europeans and other people, who, howsoever rich they are, do all the jobs themselves without the aid of any servant. That is why Mahatma Gandhi had evolved the basic education system which required every student to do manual labour himself. Today the country has to take to what Gandhiji preached to secure self-sufficiency....

The ordinary economic laws in a way apply to the nations as well. If a nation spends more than it produces it is bound to go bankrupt. If a nation is to progress, it has not only to produce enough to meet its requirements but also save and build up reserves. In India, unfortunately, there is no saving, and we are a deficit country.<sup>6</sup> Naturally, we will make no progress. To meet the situation there are only two alternatives—either the country should borrow from abroad or save something out of its annual production. In the Soviet Union, the Government, compelled by the force of circumstances, was left with no alternative but to save out of the annual production and it did so with great determination and ultimate success but at a huge cost to the people.

The Socialist Party or any other party could not provide a different or easier answer to this fundamental question. I am fully aware of the fact that if

6. Presenting the budget for 1951-52, the Finance Minister, C.D. Deshmukh, said that at the existing level of taxation, the total revenue would amount to Rs 369.89 crores and the expenditure to Rs 375.43 crores with a deficit of Rs 5.54 crores.

greater production is to be ensured profits or gains should not be pocketed by the rich few but should be evenly distributed among all the people. But the problems of equal distribution will be solved only when there is surplus production.

There is the problem of land and land tenure. The Congress Governments have undertaken the abolition of zamindaris since they are a halter round the neck not only of the peasant but of the country's economy as well. The abolition of zamindari is a part of the Congress pledge, but even then the Congress wants to abolish it with the least possible harm to any section of the people. The matter of zamindari abolition is, however, in the High Courts<sup>7</sup> and I do not want to say anything about them. The High Courts are fully empowered to decide whether or not a measure is in contravention of the Constitution.

Constitution-making is the responsibility of the people and they are empowered to enact any Constitution through their representatives. The economic questions of the people have to be decided for the benefit of society and so all impediments to economic welfare have to be removed. The representatives of the people who draft the Constitution have little experience in doing it. That is why a committee has been formed to study the necessary amendments that should be incorporated in the Constitution. For Constitutions are not an end in themselves and surely, a Constitution cannot be allowed to become a chain around the people's neck. A Constitution is meant to help the betterment of the lot of the people and the general welfare of society.

There are complaints against the Government. I am sorry that people are getting absorbed in petty jealousies and dirty politics. I, for one, never hesitate to admit either my own mistakes or those of the Government. And the same is true about the Congress. Unfortunately, since I admitted my own and the Government's mistakes, some people in this country and some foreign observers were apt to draw the wrong conclusion that the record of the Government has been a long series of mistakes and failures. In other countries, the political leaders, unlike those in India, never admit their mistakes and, on the contrary, boast about their own achievements, and only their opponents point out their mistakes. If our leaders have differed from those elsewhere it is mostly on account of the influence of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Government has many achievements to its credit, even if it has committed mistakes. I want the people to reflect on what the Government has done during the last three or four years, what problems it has faced, what dangers it has combated and crushed, and what initiative it has displayed. I will urge them to

7. The High Courts of Allahabad and Patna in their decisions on 12 March 1951 impugned the validity of the zamindari abolition acts. Later the Constitution (First Amendment) Act, 1951, passed in June 1951, removed the zamindari acts from the purview of the courts.



compare these achievements of the Government of India with those of the government of any other country.

I have come to Lucknow in connection with the opening of the Central Drug Research Institute tomorrow.<sup>8</sup> What the Government has done for the progress of science in the country in the last two or three years had not been done during the last 150 years put together. Without science the country will not progress, and by organising a chain of laboratories and encouraging scientific research, the Government has laid a foundation for the future progress and prosperity of the country.

Unless we undertake scientific research and have modern weapons of war, we will not be able to maintain our freedom and progress on the road to prosperity. We cannot today fight with bows and arrows as our ancestors did centuries ago. One of the main reasons why India had fallen a prey to the foreign invaders in the past was that the few Frenchmen or Englishmen who came to this country had better arms and weapons. Therefore, for the country to progress and remain strong, we have to invent new things and apply science to life. It is with this aim in view that the Government of India has set up eleven laboratories. Indian youth has capacity and capability second to none in the world and, given opportunities, they can prove their mettle....

At the recent A.I.C.C. session at Ahmedabad, I called for unity<sup>9</sup> not because I wanted one voice and one party in the country. In fact, I dislike 'yes' men and have even told my secretaries so. I will not complain but will rather welcome if there are dozens of parties with integrity and honesty of purpose. So far as I am concerned, I do not have a closed, but an inquiring mind. Besides doing my work and reading, I still snatch time to discuss matters with men of experience.

I do not want dirty party-politics and petty bickerings and I call upon the people to end them. Some of the decisions of the Congress had been of a far-reaching importance and had changed the face of the nation. But there were other decisions also which were forgotten no sooner than they were taken. If the Congress resolution is merely formally passed and not implemented with determination, the organisation will lose its vitality and strength and degenerate. The Congress came into existence to free India from bondage but that task is still half-done, for freedom still lacks a firm foundation and security. I am not interested in elections for I have a higher purpose in life. One who devotes himself to lofty ideals and great work is bound to be great; and a man indulging in petty politics, however big a seat he might be occupying, essentially remains a small man. The Congress to be strong and vital needs men of integrity in its ranks to carry out its decisions....

8. For Nehru's inaugural address at the Institute, see *post*, pp. 91-94.

9. See *post*, pp. 115-116.



I am surprised at the activities of the communists. If what has been perpetrated in Hyderabad is communism, it has to be crushed with a strong hand. It was a kind of dacoity and arson in which the communists indulged in Hyderabad. It was a kind of planned terrorism in which men, women and children were brutally murdered. Communism cannot spread at the point of a pistol and will not be allowed to be spread that way. In the name of communism or Gandhism, all acts cannot be condoned or pardoned. As for myself, I am not an enemy of communism. Do you think what the communists have done in Telangana is human?

I wonder how a man of intelligence can be attracted towards communal organisations. Indians have weaknesses but they do not lack in intelligence. The communal organisations did not participate in the freedom struggle and tried to make political capital out of the Partition. Somehow, the communal frenzy let loose by the Partition was controlled mainly due to the martyrdom of Mahatma Gandhi. Though every one was filled with grief and sorrow at Mahatma Gandhi's death, it was in the fitness of things that Mahatma Gandhi should have died for the ideals which he preached and which he practised.

With a full sense of responsibility, I can state that the Hindu Mahasabha after due deliberation had decided to foment communal riots in the country. Even a pattern according to which these riots should be organised had been decided upon. Their plan aimed at circulating baseless rumours in the country which would create a communal frenzy in the Hindu masses. I warn you against rumour-mongering. Do you think that the Muslims in the country will risk the displeasure of the majority community by committing acts of indiscretion and thereby precipitating a riot? The Hindu Mahasabha was following these tactics because it had neither the strength nor the moral courage to face the Congress openly.

I do not see any other party, excepting the Congress, that can save the country. But then I am sometimes disappointed with the Congress also. However, I continue to work because I have a faith and fire in me and, above all, a faith in the country and the people and their future. Whether I succeed in my work or not depends on your conscious and willing cooperation in solving the country's difficulties. *Jai Hind.*

# NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

## II. The Economy

### (i) Food





## 1. To B.G. Kher<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 25, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

Thank you for your letter of the 23rd December. In this letter you have dealt at length with the food situation and with our present food policy, which you and your Government view with some apprehension. In particular, you think that the insistence on self-sufficiency by 1952<sup>2</sup> is unreal and might even be harmful. I do not understand how it can be harmful except in the sense that there is some disappointment if we fail to achieve an objective aimed at.

2. As regards its unreality, the question can be considered in two ways: Firstly, how far this is physically possible given normal conditions and normal effort on our people's part; secondly, though physically possible, is it probable because of our governmental or popular failings or other circumstances?

3. First of all, what are we aiming at and what does our programme of self-sufficiency mean? We have defined self-sufficiency in the sense that our normal requirements will be met subject to two factors: (1) no special disaster and (2) no considerable transfer of land for cotton and jute. That is to say, if there is any kind of a special disaster, we shall import foodgrains from outside; and if we decide to transfer more land for commercial crops, then also we make good the deficiency so caused by import of foodgrains. This seems to me a completely reasonable position to take up and one that can be achieved, if we are serious about it. As a matter of fact, we have not thus far diverted much land to jute and cotton, nor does our future programme affect the food situation very much. To some extent, it does. But that is not a major factor in the situation. We have to balance these factors and see what is for the good of the country.

4. The normal food shortage can, I am quite certain, be covered if we proceed methodically and with determination. Naturally this requires not only wisdom on the part of Government but also a measure of cooperation on the part of the people. Every big effort requires that. If this is lacking, then we fail. I shall not, in this letter, go into the details of this matter. Many of the things that you say are perfectly true and in fact there is no dispute about them.

5. I do not understand, I repeat, why there is this criticism of our self-sufficiency programme. That programme has not been put forward in a fit of

1. J.N. Collection.

2. In March 1949, the Government adopted a programme for achieving self-sufficiency in food production by 31 December 1951, but in view of the crisis arising due to the natural calamities in early 1950, it was decided in July 1950 to extend the date for the attainment of this objective to 31 March 1952. Thereafter food was to be imported only in exceptional situations.

exuberance or idealism, but after full consideration and consultation with experts in India and outside. Unfortunately, many of our own people run it down and thus create the very conditions for its lack of success. In any event we have to push our hardest for increasing our food supplies. Is it then only the word "self-sufficiency" that comes in the way?

6. Throughout this last year or more, ever since we mentioned the self-sufficiency in food, we have had in view the possibility of world war. If such a war comes, it is bound to affect our imports—this in two ways: the actual difficulty of getting food abroad in sufficient quantity and the scarcity of shipping to carry it. Both these factors are beyond our control. And yet we shall have to face this situation if a war comes. To rely on food imports from abroad is the most short-sighted of policies in these circumstances. It may be that, in spite of every effort on our part, we cannot get what we want from abroad. What then are we to do? Perhaps die of starvation. That may well be so. But the war will not be relaxed because of our misery. The international situation today is, as you know, exceedingly dangerous. It is possible that war may not come for a few months or even a year. But war conditions have begun to prevail already. The whole tremendous State machine of the United States, as well as of some other countries, has been switched on for war purposes. This itself creates a very difficult situation in regard to all supplies, whether food or machinery. Shipping becomes more and more difficult to obtain. So whatever policy we may adopt, we have to take these obvious facts into consideration. Every relaxation on our part in regard to food production, procurement, etc., increases the danger. My point is that there is absolutely no alternative before us, and to say that we should plan in future for large-scale imports is not realistic. Of course we shall import to the best of our ability as long as we can. No programme is going to come in the way of our imports if they are needed.

7. We are having a sample survey in various parts of the country. This has already brought out some interesting features which indicate that in several parts of the country there is more food than we had thought. It is spread out now and not particularly easy to procure. But it is there and the gap we think that exists is not quite so big as most people imagine. This, however, is by the way and should not affect our calculations. The point is that given certain inducements, we can draw out more food, certainly in the U.P. and round about. Peasants and farmers will part with more food if given something in exchange.

8. As regards food imports during the next year, we have strained every nerve to get as much as possible.<sup>3</sup> At tremendous cost to ourselves, we are

3. India planned to import 37 lakh tons of foodgrains in 1951; but 10 lakh tons more were required to maintain a reasonably comfortable food situation.



getting all the available food from wherever we can. We have ordered already three or three and a quarter million tons. We are in the process of ordering another quarter million tons. In addition, we are trying to get anything from one million to two million tons extra in the United States. We are also carrying on some negotiations with China for rice. We can do no more. If, in spite of our efforts, we fail to get enough food to cover entirely the shortage for next year, we have to put up with the situation as there is no help for it. It is not as if, because of some notion or idea, we were not importing as much as we might. We are going to the uttermost limit. The only other thing to be done is to accept facts as they are and to make the best of them.

9. I know very well your difficulties as well as the difficulties of some other States in India. We can only do our utmost to get over those difficulties. For any State to demand more from us than what we have got or can obtain, is to ask us to do something which is entirely beyond our power.

10. We are dealing with hard facts and we can only deal with them adequately by practical remedies. At the same time, in such a position, public psychology counts for a great deal. If we cause alarms and generally create a feeling of panic in the country, then we are doomed and all the imports in the world will not save us. I am surprised to get ultimatums from various States. If so much foodgrains is not supplied to them, then they will give up the sponge. This is an attitude of desperation which does not help at all. It can only bring ruin to the country and more particularly to the State concerned. The basic fact is that we have somehow to carry on with what we can get from abroad, whatever that might be. No amount of shouting will increase it, but shouting will certainly lessen the chance on our home front and create a hysterical reaction, which is very dangerous.

11. Thus, if the quantity which is available is not enough for our purposes, the only course open is to reduce the quantity of rationing. There is a limit to this reduction and we cannot give less than will be enough to keep body and soul together. At the same time if the shortage is spread out over a large area, if necessary even the whole of India, then the burden and suffering is shared and is much less. It would be an act of extreme unwisdom to allow our machinery for controls, procurement, etc., to break down even if there is a strain.<sup>4</sup>

12. One of the principal new sources of our food supply will result from the completion of our river valley schemes, both big and small. But we have to wait for four or five years before we can profit by these. Meanwhile we have to carry on somehow and increase our food production.

4. In many parts of the country, foodgrains cost twice as much as the control price. The U.P. Government raised the price of millet despite the Centre's advice to the contrary. The rationing system broke down in several States and demonstrations were staged in some parts of Bombay to demand full rations.



13. We have unfortunately begun to rely far too much on the outside world. This is primarily so in regard to foodgrains. But it is also so in regard to manure, seeds, etc. There is a tremendous deal to improve in this respect in India, provided the people cooperate.

14. You are entirely mistaken if you think that we have avoided long-term agreements with food-producing countries because of our self-sufficiency programme. We have in fact been trying to have a long-term agreement with Burma for sometime past and it is Burma that is hesitating. The fact is that the Korean war and what followed has made a great difference in economic conditions in the world. This applies not only to food but to all kinds of raw materials. The U.S. is trying to buy in every market what it requires and is prepared to pay any price. The result is not only a world shortage of many things, but strong inflationary tendencies. This process will grow in the next year.

15. I need hardly tell you that everything that you have written is receiving and will receive our most earnest consideration. I am sending your letter to our Food Minister<sup>5</sup> together with a copy of my reply to it.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

5. K.M. Munshi.

## 2. To Maharaj Singh<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 27, 1950

My dear Maharaj Singh,<sup>2</sup>

Thank you for your letter of December 26th. I have received Kher's long letter too and I have already sent him a reply. I do not quite know what this demand for more and more food at an early date means. We have strained ourselves to the uttermost and tried to obtain as much food as we can from the ends of the earth. We are going on trying to our utmost capacity. We are moving Governments in the matter as well as on the question of shipping. We are spending far more than we can afford upon it and we are prepared to spend even more. What more can any Government do? If it is suggested that we should send everything that we have to Bombay and allow other States to starve, surely that is not a reasonable suggestion. I understand that Munshi has promised to supply about

1. File No. 31(93)/50-PMS.

2. He was at this time the Governor of Bombay.

750,000 tons to Bombay with the additional promise to supply more if we can get it. All this is necessarily subject to our getting these foodstuffs from abroad. If we do not get them, we have to do without them, famine or no famine.

I just do not understand the attitude of Bombay in this matter and I do not think they are doing themselves or the Central Government much good by their casting all their blame on us for everything that has happened. There is talk of a long-term policy, there is objection to our food sufficiency programme, and there are many other things said. We shall gladly change our policy if we are convinced of our error. I am not convinced, nor do I understand what our demand for sufficiency has to do with our buying abroad next year or subsequently, when need arises. I have regretfully come to the conclusion that there is no sense of cooperation in the States and each State fends for itself and does not care much for the others. That of course can only lead to disaster and we shall have that disaster if we do not cooperate more fully. It has become a way of escape for every State to blame the Government of India. Perhaps the Government of India is to blame. But escapes do not solve any problem.

I am not concerned with the next election. I am concerned with meeting a famine situation in large parts of India<sup>3</sup> and I am going to do my utmost to meet it. Whatever we may do and whatever policy we might adopt, we cannot get more from the world than the world can supply. We have to take the consequences of that, however bad they may be. The suggestion that all rationing should be given up is a counsel of despair and will inevitably make the situation much worse.

I repeat that we shall do our utmost for Bombay. We may be able to send even a million tons in 1951. But the responses that we have thus far are not adequate for it. We have approached the U.S. Government and are pressing hard for more foodgrains. It is no good our making promises in the air.

It should be remembered also that the near war situation comes in our way and if war comes, it will be still worse. It seems to me that there is not enough realisation of the situation in the world and India.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. Floods in northern India, deficient rainfall in the south, and a series of earthquakes in Assam had created drought conditions over a wide area. Bihar and Madras had experienced the worst crop failure. The influx of refugees from Pakistan and the fears of war aroused by the Korean crisis leading to hoarding of food and increase in prices caused further deterioration in the food situation.



### 3. The Whole Nation Should Share the Food Shortage<sup>1</sup>

I fully agree with the principle underlying the resolution.<sup>2</sup> Its wording, of course, can be improved. The question of food is the most important question before us. The whole economy of the country depends on its quick solution. It is possible that the present difficulties we are facing are due to our having made mistakes in the past. Whatever that might be, an all-out effort has to be made to attain self-sufficiency in food by March 1952.

In any plan to increase food production, cooperation of the States is essential. But all the States have not played the game in facing the food crisis. Either out of selfish reasons or political reasons certain States have not procured as much food as they could have. But these difficulties about political questions have to be solved and got over and more procurement secured. Zamindars or kisans, opposed to procurement, are now sought to be left alone, but they should be approached and told the nature of the crisis and the need for sharing the food shortage equitably. Ultimately, it is through the help of the State Governments that the food problem can be solved. Whatever powers the Centre may take for itself, it is the States which have to carry out the policies of the Centre. So the States' machinery has to be geared up in solving the food crisis.

We have decided to give food first priority. We are now trying to make India self-sufficient in the matter of food, cotton and jute. But food will be given top priority. If necessary we will have to import also.

It will be a dangerous thing to rely always on food imports. Such dependence will lead to serious consequences. The nation can be starved out if countries having food refuse to give it; to that extent India will leave herself open to pressure from others. It is imperative, therefore, that sufficient food should be grown in the country.

While it is important to stress the need for growing more food, in my opinion something must be done about the increase in population. Unless that is done it will not be possible to raise the standard of living.

I want the whole nation to share in the food shortage. At present even the prices of foodgrains differ from State to State. All this must be made uniform as far as possible.

1. Reply to the debate on a resolution at the A.I.C.C. session, demanding a reorientation of Government's food policy, Ahmedabad, 31 January 1951. From *Congress Bulletin*, January-February 1951, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 1 February 1951.
2. The resolution said in part that "it is imperative to have a uniform food policy and equality of sacrifice throughout India."



Through hard work alone can this food crisis be solved. The Central Government has decided to increase food production in certain selected areas under its direction but the State Governments must help to carry out the plans of the Central Government.<sup>3</sup>

3. The resolution was withdrawn.

#### 4. To K.M. Munshi<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 4, 1951

My dear Munshi,

I enclose copies of two letters I have sent today.<sup>2</sup> I feel strongly that we must do something to get at this surplus grain, etc., in the Punjab, western U.P., etc. We have adopted a policy of dealing through State Governments and that is a right policy. But if the State Governments do not play the game, then there is no reason why we should not buy directly where grain is available. Offers for this come to us and we do not pursue them because of our policy. I think that policy must be adapted and varied to meet changing conditions. If we started buying directly, the State Governments would sit up and perhaps make greater efforts themselves.

I learnt that yesterday some so-called waste foodgrains or rather the powder that accumulates at the bottom was sold in Delhi on behalf of the Food Ministry. It was stated however that much of these was good stuff. If these facts are correct, the person responsible for this sale was either exceedingly careless or worse. Do you know anything about this?

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. File No. 31(91)/50-PMS.
2. Drawing the attention of G.B. Pant and Gopichand Bhargava, Chief Ministers of U.P. and East Punjab respectively, about the reported availability of large quantities of foodgrains in western U.P. and East Punjab and their flow into the black market in Delhi. Nehru asked for effective measures to be taken by the State Governments to improve their procurement of foodgrains.

## 5. To Dorothy Norman<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 24, 1951

My dear Dorothy,

Thank you for your letter of February 11th. I am a little ashamed to write to you because I have been very remiss in this matter. Because of the rush of official letters and business, personal letters have a way of being put aside for leisure hours. The leisure hours do not come and so these letters remain unanswered. Indeed it is because your last letter is rather an official one that it is being dealt with without undue delay.

You will forgive me, I hope, for not having written to you previously. The burden of work grows and the human mind becomes more or less of a machine. It is difficult to switch the machine in another direction which should not function like a machine.

My sister has written to me repeatedly of the great work you have done in regard to the supply of food to India from the U.S.<sup>2</sup> Indeed I am sure that it is largely because of your energy and enthusiasm and the work of your Committee that so much attention has been drawn to this matter in the U.S. and we are all grateful to you.

You refer to some note I sent to a Columbia Professor.<sup>3</sup> I did not attach much importance to what he wrote. But it was difficult for me to say no. It was the machine working. But I agree with you completely that these petty gifts, though welcome always, make no difference whatever and indeed might come in the way of anything big.

I was glad to meet Norman Cousins<sup>4</sup> of *The Saturday Review of Literature* and we had one or two fairly good talks. But he is persistent and wants to discuss high philosophy with me and get it recorded. This is something out of

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Dorothy Norman had formed the Food for India Emergency Committee, consisting of Catholic and Protestant Church groups, the Quakers and some prominent individuals, to plead for food aid to India.

3. In his reply to a letter from Earnest Dale, Nehru wrote on 2 February 1951: "India is certainly in great need of foodgrains. It is not money that we require. Any private effort to send foodgrains would be welcome. But the quantity required by us is so large that private efforts can only cover a very small part of it. But the gesture would be appreciated."

4. (1912-1990); editor, *Saturday Review*, 1940-77, and editor emeritus, 1980-82. Nehru had conversations with Norman Cousins at New Delhi in March 1951. Their transcript was published in *The Saturday Review of Literature* (New York) on 14 and 21 April 1951 and later as a book, *Talks with Nehru*, 1951. The text is included in the next volume of the *Selected Works*.



my line and I do not know that anyone can discuss any serious subject seriously with a recording machine by his side.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 6. Ships for Import of Foodgrains<sup>1</sup>

We have been trying to get food from abroad and we have tapped all possible sources in the world. We have found that while it is not very easy to get what we want, far the greater difficulty is in finding transport for it.<sup>2</sup> In fact the availability of shipping governs the situation. Owing to war scares, shipping freight charges are going up and up. About the middle of January these charges were about 130 to 140 per ton. Now they have risen to 170 to 180 and this upward process will go on probably till they go far beyond 200.

2. I am told that among other reasons for this rise in shipping freights is the knowledge that India requires shipping badly for food transport. The more we talk about it, the more we have to pay.

3. But the question for us to consider is how long we can afford this kind of thing. The situation is a little easier because of our trade pact with Pakistan.<sup>3</sup> If we get the American wheat it will be still easier. What are the prospects for next year or even the latter half of this year? If next year's prospects are such that our dependence on outside food will not be great, then we can carry on somehow this year. If, however, we still have to import a considerable quantity, then the question of shipping and freight charges becomes exceedingly important.

4. It is clear that the war scare will continue (even if war does not take place in the near future). The rearmament programme of the U.S.A. and other countries will therefore also continue and stockpiling on a vast scale will take place throughout this year and possibly the next. The world is preparing for a war of huge dimensions and long duration. The U.S. will pay any price for anything it wants and her requirements for rearmament and other purposes are

1. Note to the Minister for Food and Agriculture, 28 February 1951. J.N. Collection.
2. About 150 ships were required for the estimated import of 37 lakh tons of foodgrains during 1951.
3. Following an agreement signed on 25 February 1951, trade between India and Pakistan was resumed after a gap of seventeen months.



becoming bigger and bigger. Even she might not be able to spare shipping for us.

5. The whole point of this argument is that we might be totally unable to get shipping when we want it badly or the charge for it might be wholly prohibitive. If that is so, then is it not worthwhile our considering the purchase of some ships. They need not be new ships, but they have to be of course seaworthy and capable of carrying foodgrains. Ships are expensive, but paying fantastic freights is still more expensive and means further reliance on others. Such ships would form a kind of Tramp Fleet and need not belong to any regular shipping line.

6. I do not know the finances of this proposition. They may be entirely outside our capacity. But then the payment of inflated freight charges may be still more outside our capacity.

7. Obviously, if we think even vaguely of buying ships, this must be kept a close secret. Any talk of it will make purchase difficult, as prices would shoot up. The whole transaction would have to be undertaken with care and discretion.

8. As far as I can remember, we did agree to buy two or three small ships. I do not know what has been done about that. But if even that purchase is made, it will have to be done without much fuss or shouting. I was rather thinking of somewhat larger ships, say about 8,000 tons.

9. I am sending this note only to the Finance Minister and the Food Minister for their private consideration.

## NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

## II. The Economy

## (ii) Industry





## 1. Production of Newsprint<sup>1</sup>

What I suggested to you was that you might put up before me some kind of a scheme for a pilot plant or whatever is possible, where the new method can be used.<sup>2</sup> We may hand it over to a private party if we so choose and perhaps that might be desirable. But we should like to know exactly what a State-owned concern would cost us or in the alternative we could have an autonomous corporation with private capital and some Government capital.

You are right in telling me that our Government management of industry is defective. Because of this, we cannot run away from it but have to tackle it and improve it. I am sorry to learn about the delay in your getting Rs 5 lakhs from the Industry and Supply Ministry<sup>3</sup>....

Whatever the Secretariat of the I. & S. Ministry may think, the Minister<sup>4</sup> is keen and anxious to have our cooperation....

About foreign investments. As I have told you we should welcome any help that we can get but there is one aspect of the matter with which you are not wholly in touch and that is a very important aspect at the present moment. This is political. This will not come in the way. It is only possible to consider specific proposals. We can consider this matter more later.

1. Note to S.S. Bhatnagar, 3 November 1950. File No. 17(188)/50-PMS. Extracts. Bhatnagar was Director, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, and Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources and Scientific Research.
2. Nehru noted on 31 October that a pilot plant might be started for manufacture of newsprint following the new method developed of producing newsprint from bamboowood. Bhatnagar suggested on 2 November that the plant might be set up by private parties as it would involve work on a large scale.
3. The Ministry of Industry had agreed to provide Rs 5 lakhs to the Department of Scientific Research for the development of newsprint ink.
4. H.K. Mahtab was the Union Minister for Commerce and Industry at this time.

## 2. To C.D. Deshmukh<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 12, 1951

My dear Deshmukh,

I have been thinking about the penicillin project a good deal since our conference the other day. Previous to that, I had heard rather vaguely of the position and

1. File No. 17(116)/48-PMS. Extracts.

had not applied my mind very much to it. From London, as you will remember, I sent you a telegram. I did so because on the facts before me it seemed to me very desirable for us to associate ourselves with WHO<sup>2</sup> After that, I forgot about this till we met in conference, rather till a day before.

There are still some matters that are not quite clear and require investigation. But my whole inclination is in favour of the WHO scheme positively and, independently of that, rather against our tying ourselves up in such a matter with a big American firm.<sup>3</sup> This is apart from the financial aspect of it. Of course the contribution of WHO is another important factor, just as the royalties to the commercial firm are equally important on the other side.

The whole question ultimately turns on the competence of WHO to deliver the goods. I cannot myself conceive of WHO not being in a position to do so with all the world resources that they can command now or later. Their whole reputation will be at stake and they cannot afford any kind of lack of success. This is not so much a question of a particular individual but rather of a world organisation, supported by most countries in the world, throwing its full weight in the success of a scheme. I see no risk involved in this of any kind. I see on the other hand not only benefit to us directly but also a larger advantage in the sense of our becoming one of the principal centres of large-scale activity by two great world organisations.<sup>4</sup> The alternative is, that is, if we reject the WHO offer, that we shall be neglected by these organisations and can expect little help from them in future. We contribute considerably to their funds and expect return, larger, if possible, than our contributions. We have long pressed for this and now that the return comes, if we reject, then we can hardly ask for help in future. The political effect of this also will be considerable.

On the other hand, I would hesitate to tie myself up in such a line with an American firm of note. I can understand giving the biggest contracts to foreign firms for a particular piece of work, such as might be involved in the river valley scheme or building some other great plant. But a tie-up in regard to drugs, etc., on a secret basis will mean that we can only develop through them and not apart from them. If we need in future more penicillin or like plants, we would, in the ordinary course, have to go to them. That would mean more and more royalties flowing out and more and more dependence on their particular

2. On India's request, WHO/UNICEF allocated, in December 1950, \$ 850,000 for equipment and \$ 350,000 for technical assistance for setting up a penicillin plant in India. In his telegram of 15 January, not printed here, Nehru favoured accepting the offer on grounds of principle and practical advantage.
3. Merck & Co. Inc. had developed a cheaper process for manufacture of penicillin and were prepared to collaborate with India in setting up a penicillin plant.
4. The Indian penicillin plant was to be the first international project under the antibiotics programme of WHO/UNICEF, which wished to develop it as a training centre linked with international research laboratories.



processes and their technical personnel, etc. To bind ourselves for the future in this way appears to me to be an unwise procedure. If Mercks or any big firm comes to India, they do so for their own profit. I do not grudge them that, provided it is also advantageous to me. But these big combines are tough and have a way of spreading out their tentacles. While we might possibly gain some temporary advantage, this would, I think, come in the way of our scientific progress in this and similar lines of research. Advances are being made all over the world in medicine and drugs. We can certainly take advantage of these advances anyhow, if we can get at them. But I think it is likely that a tie-up with a big commercial firm will not fit in with our scientific research in other laboratories.

We have built up a considerable number of laboratories and I have specially laid stress on research and the scientific approach, other than the normal commercial approach to scientific problems. The commercial approach can pay dividends in a country like the U.S. where the whole basis of the social structure is commercial and individual profit-making. We cannot emulate the U.S. in this and have to find a different way, a way in which the State takes a large hand and science has free play. To some extent, this free play of science is limited by the buying up of talent by commercial firms for their own advantage. We become parties to this latter process, if we try to develop under the aegis of a big foreign commercial firm.

These are some larger considerations, quite apart from the immediate merits of the problem before us. On these immediate merits also, I see no particular advantage in accepting the Mercks offer. They may, by their efficiency, have large-scale production but, inevitably, they would like to tie up our prices with their own. They would not like our factory to compete with their products, even if we could manufacture or sell at a lower cost. Prices will be fixed on an adequate profit basis, fitting in with American conditions.

I was struck by what Keaney<sup>5</sup> said the other day that UNICEF were far the largest buyers of penicillin by open public tenders. They bought from a large number of firms. This showed that prices of penicillin in bulk are much the same everywhere and there is no particular advantage that Merck possess, as many other tenders are also accepted.

The question of patents has to be explored. But there appears to be a difference between patents and secret processes. A patent ceases to be a secret process by the mere fact of its having been patented (or, at any rate, very largely so). A patent however gives certain rights to the possessor of it, so that others cannot use that particular machine or method without some payment, either a lump sum or a royalty. A secret process apparently is not something patented but which is known only to some persons or a firm. If this gets

5. A representative of UNICEF.



known by others, there is nothing to stop them using it, because there is no patent.

I suppose any patent can always be purchased, but not so a secret process in this way. Anyhow this has to be examined. It is clear that the production of penicillin, generally speaking, has been highly standardised though there are improved methods being used by advanced concerns.

I do not know what the contract of the Swedish firm is but, I imagine, that it is a small affair.<sup>6</sup> Even if it persists still, which I rather doubt, it can be easily dealt with.

I am looking at this whole question from the point of view of our future development and planning. In a sense it depends to some extent upon our planning outlook. Large foreign concerns with vested interests in India may come in the way of that planning and when those concerns are American, they might well produce difficulties for us in many ways. I remember the constant complaints I heard in England, during my last visit, of American interference there and the regret of many people, highly placed, at having put themselves in a position to be interfered with in this way....

I understand that the WHO people have not seen our present estimates. I have asked them to prepare their own estimates with such materials that they have got with them. These estimates to be (1) for a full-sized factory as planned by us and (2) for a smaller one. They said they would do so, but they asked for the help of an engineer for the construction part of it. I have asked Gadgil to send them an engineer.

I am inclined to think that it would be far the safest for us to have a Government of India project only and not one in association with the Bombay Government.<sup>7</sup> This kind of association leads to delay and sometimes to a pull in different directions.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

6. M/s Kambolaget of Sweden, who were to provide technical assistance in the designing and erection of a penicillin plant in India, had in the meantime themselves entered into an agreement with Mercks to obtain their technology.
7. The Central Government as well as the Government of Bombay were represented on the Penicillin Committee set up by the Government of India on 23 April 1949. Eventually, Hindustan Antibiotics Limited was set up by the Government of India in 1954 with a penicillin factory at Pimpri near Pune. Production started in 1955.

### 3. Pre-fabricated Housing<sup>1</sup>

My colleague, the Health Minister, will, no doubt, somewhat at a later stage, deal with this matter<sup>2</sup> because she is acquainted with most of the facts.<sup>3</sup> I should like to place before the House certain considerations which we as Government and I, specially, have had before us in the course of the last two and a half years or whatever the exact period may be since this project was considered by us.

The House knows that housing or lack of housing is one of the principal problems facing us in India. In the Planning Committee, we have discussed this question in its various aspects with experts and others as to how to fulfil this lack and what to do about it.<sup>4</sup> It is a terrible problem all over the world, more so in India at present. Because of this, we as Government considered all the aspects of it two and a half years ago and we came to the conclusion that it was highly desirable for us to experiment with pre-fab housing. It was obvious to us then, as it is now, that large-scale house construction in India must necessarily be by what are called traditional methods, maybe improved traditional methods, of course, but traditional methods. We could not reach the hundreds of thousands of villages in India, or hundreds of thousands of towns in India with pre-fab houses. Nevertheless, the demand was so great that we felt that we should experiment with pre-fab houses in one or two places, and that this would fulfil a small part of the demand, a very small part, but nevertheless a very helpful one. It is not a question of replacing the traditional methods.

Secondly, and this was more important, traditional methods get into ruts and do not improve unless some impetus for improvement, some new idea, some push, some competition comes in their way. We, in India, in this as in many other things, have got into ruts and we do not improve because we have no compulsion to improve. Therefore, if new systems of house construction are brought in, they may succeed or they may not succeed, but they bring new ideas which can be *mutatis mutandis* translated into traditional buildings which

1. Speech in Parliament, 22 February 1951. From *Parliamentary Debates, Official Report*, 1951, Vol. VIII, Part II, cols 3349–3356. Extracts.
2. Moving a cut motion on the demand for grant of capital outlay on industrial development, H.V. Kamath said that the Government Housing Factory, set up in New Delhi in 1950 for manufacture of pre-fabricated houses, had been a "colossal and ignominious" failure.
3. Amrit Kaur admitted that the building of houses was not satisfactory because of the failure of technicians from a British firm who were asked to advise.
4. The National Planning Committee had, in 1939, set up a sub-committee on housing, and in its report of 10 May 1940 recommended the creation of statutory authorities at the Central and State levels for the promotion of housing.



will result in improved traditional structures. They will make better houses or speed up their construction. Therefore, the central reason why we thought of pre-fab houses was, in a small sense, to actually supply in part the need which was very great, but much more so from the point of view of bringing in these new ideas which may be fitted in to some extent in traditional construction.

Some of us have spent a good deal of time in looking at housing problems in other parts of the world and trying to compare them with our own problems, and the various experiments that they have had in other parts. They have had hundreds of experiments in England alone. I suppose they must have had scores of hundreds of them; many of them failed, some succeeded, some largely and some in a lesser degree. Ultimately, they have evolved, with this record of success and failure, new and varied methods of construction and they have constructed a large number of houses. In India, we have been experimenting in various ways. There is a housing research institute which has just been formalised.<sup>5</sup> That is experimenting on different types of roofs, different types of windows and different types of panels, etc. In the Punjab, in the refugee houses and elsewhere, they have experimented on soil construction of a special type, and so on and so forth. All these are experiments going on to find out what the suitable thing is. In our plans we felt that insofar as it is possible, we should use, obviously, local material and not material which has to be imported. From this point of view, we came to the conclusion that it was very necessary for us to give a start to pre-fab housing in this country so as to find out how it could improve generally or specifically in that matter.

May I correct a statement made by the honourable Member? We did not send the Director of Housing, or whatever he was called, at the time to England for this purpose. He went there to attend a number of conferences and other things, quite apart from this particular housing project<sup>6</sup>....

I remember that. Permit me to go on. He was going to attend a number of conferences in Switzerland and elsewhere on various subjects connected with his work, planning and other things. We asked him to remain there for a week or two to investigate pre-fab houses also. My point is that he did not go for this purpose. I am merely correcting a fact.

At that time, the Finance Minister, Mr Shanmukham Chetty, was also going there. Discussing the matter in the Cabinet we authorised Mr Shanmukham Chetty to go into the matter carefully and because we wanted to get things

5. The Central Building Research Institute was founded on 10 February 1951 at Roorkee.

6. H.V. Kamath interrupted to say that in May 1948 the Cabinet had decided to send Otto H. Koenigsberger, chief architect of Mysore State, to explore the possibilities of adapting to Indian conditions the methods used in England for building pre-fabricated houses with a view to setting up a housing factory in India. Koenigsberger later became Director of Housing, Government of India, and Managing Director, Government Housing Factory, New Delhi.



done as rapidly as possible, we authorised him, if he approved after proper consultation, to give his temporary agreement, so that it may be considered by the Cabinet later. Our charge was really given to Mr Shanmukham Chetty. Dr Koenigsberger was asked to report to him there as representing our Government. Dr Koenigsberger and some others there reported to him. Mr Shanmukham Chetty apparently saw some houses there. As a result of that, he approved of this plan and this particular project. Mr Shanmukham Chetty came back and said that he had approved of this. These are the details attached to that project. Finally, it was examined by some people here and it was accepted with variations or whatever it was....

However, the point is, we entered into this contract largely because Mr Shanmukham Chetty had practically entered into it before he returned from England. And we entered into it because we were anxious to make a beginning from the larger point of view of bringing in new ideas in regard to house constructions in this country. Frankly speaking, it is perfectly true that this scheme or project has not succeeded as we expected it to succeed;<sup>7</sup> but it has not failed ignominiously as Mr Kamath may say.

It is not a question of opinion, but it is a matter of the approach to the question. I have examined a number of these houses in England and a number of these pre-fab projects have had a difficult time in the beginning. They did not make good, but they have ultimately made good. The whole point is this. You have a factory here now and it is a magnificent factory; there is no doubt about that, one of the finest you can have in India. The point now is to evolve a proper mixture, to see what components should be put in, how much of cement or sand or something else. If the mixture is correct and you make a proper panel you have succeeded; but if the mixture is not correct then you have not succeeded. The panel breaks down and gets cracked. Then it becomes a thing for scientific experimentation for the experts. In a thing like that, naturally we have to profit from other people's experiments also. There is no reason why we should take up ourselves something which requires long experimentation, etc., though, of course, materials differ in various countries.

Anyhow, two or three facts are clear. At the earlier stage there was not enough examination of this scheme as there should have been. That is point number one. The second point is one on which I do not wish to say much because we are consulting the law about it—the responsibility of the British firm with regard to this matter. It is difficult to discuss it, when we are considering the matter in the legal field. But the real point that faces us, not merely with regard to the housing factory, but in regard to the larger field of house construction is this. How can we profit by or how can we use what we have? I have no

7. The panels produced by the Housing Factory were showing a high rate of breakages.

doubt at all that this factory can be used in many ways. First of all I am not at all clear in my mind whether it cannot be used now or tomorrow for the construction of complete houses. We have asked our National Physical Laboratory and they have assured us that with a little experimentation it may be possible to produce panels which can be used for the houses. They are not dead sure about it—nobody can be.

The next question that arises is, having produced them we have to see whether that will be at an economic cost. You may produce them, but it may be a costly business. Therefore we have to consider again whether they will be produced at an economic cost.

The other point is this. Even today this factory can produce what may be called components of houses on a mass scale, that is to say, roofing materials, windows, panels of doors, etc., that fit in with the programme of traditional house-building, with proper bricks. I am pointing out the ways in which this can be used to economic advantage. It can also be used in another way. It can be used in the light industries or other industries. This is always open to us. As a matter of fact, we even now have offers from industrialists which are financially advantageous to us, to let them use the factory for their own purposes. But we want to see how we can use it either for making houses or for making the components of houses.

As I have already stated I think a number of errors and mistakes were made in this business, largely due to inexperience of the Government; largely again due to a certain, well, over-optimistic spirit of Mr Shanmukham Chetty who entered into this agreement, more or less, before he came, and we accepted it and did not check it up as closely as we ought to have done. But the fact to remember is this. Whenever such experiments have been made, in England or elsewhere, of pre-fab houses, to begin with they had a lot of trouble because it requires a very delicate mixture of the various components. If the mixture does not come off or if the quality of the components differed, you have to go on experimenting with them till you succeed. There is nothing extraordinary in that. We need not think that it is something very unusual or extraordinary that has happened here. This is the case in almost every country. It is a question of experimenting. Either you look upon it as a pure commercial venture, or as an experiment, or a mixture of an experiment plus a commercial venture. The real way to look upon it is as a mixture of an experiment and a commercial venture. And the intention is to make it a commercial venture as soon as possible. But there is always the element of experiment in these pre-fab houses.

Another point is this. I venture to say that the two or three experiments we have made in pre-fab houses round about Delhi, apart from the housing factory and others, have already led to certain improvements in the construction of traditional houses in Delhi by the P.W.D. Thus they have got some new ideas and they have applied them to the building of houses in the traditional



way, thereby improving them and slightly cheapening their cost or improving their durability. As a matter of fact, we have profited to some extent here, though it is difficult to say to what extent.

Finally, what I place before the House is this. A number of errors have been committed; there is no doubt about it. We were at that time rather, if I may say so, taken up by the first report we got from Mr Chetty who, we thought, had examined it thoroughly and we accepted it and went ahead, and the factory was built—a very fine factory. But when it came to the making of panels, these panels did not bear much weight or were not found to be strong enough to bear the weight that was put upon them, though the panels could be used for other purposes. But it is not difficult to make them strong. But then the cost factor comes in and we have to consider whether it is worthwhile doing it. Of course it is a scientific matter which we are investigating. There is no doubt even now that the factory can be used for the making of components of houses provided we decide to do so and give up the other experiments, or we may do them together. There has been loss undoubtedly, but the loss has not been considerable because the main cost incurred has been over the factory and it is there—a very fine factory. And the experiments have taught us several lessons and they may succeed. We are not, at the present moment, relying on the British firm for these experiments. It is our job, for our scientists and others to see how best we can utilise it.

For the last many months, apparently due to Mr Kamath's insistence and drawing the attention of the House to this matter, many of us have looked repeatedly into it. As a matter of fact, we have sent competent persons, expert engineers and businessmen and others to see and report on it. We have also appointed a committee and got their report<sup>8</sup> also, and, if necessary, we shall appoint other expert committees to judge the responsibility for this or that. But the main thing we must do is to utilise it to the best advantage. I do personally believe, after seeing these papers, that there has been a certain amount of slackness—I may frankly say that. The original error came from the way Government dealt with it two and a half years ago. They went ahead rather more quickly than they should have done and they should have examined the process a little more carefully. Nevertheless, normally speaking, in an experiment like this what I wish the House to consider—indeed not only in this matter but in other matters also—is this. If we are going to attempt anything, to make

8. The Mulgaonkar Enquiry Committee appointed on 2 November 1950 by the Government recommended that in view of the heavy cost involved, the consultants should ensure that the factory's construction was not delayed and was strictly in accordance with the designs and specifications laid down for it. It also suggested that along with the manufacture of the complex foam concrete load-bearing panels, the factory should in future build ordinary concrete products such as hollow concrete building blocks.



progress in new directions, we shall inevitably have to experiment and to submit to failures and to expect failure or some lack of success. Otherwise you cannot simply go ahead in any experiment or method of construction or anywhere else. Our methods of construction in India today are highly unsatisfactory. They are expensive in the long run, and they are slow and we can never get going fast enough unless we intend to change them completely and basically, unless we improve them in a variety of ways. As a matter of fact, they are improving and many new ideas have been adopted. There has been marked improvement in some aspects since this pre-fab business came in. The mere fact of it has improved some of our methods and we have got new ideas and they have been rightly adopted. So that in future I hope the House will be perfectly willing, not in regard to this matter, but in other matters, to experiment in order that we may go ahead much more speedily and at less cost. In countries like the U.S.A., England, France, Switzerland or Germany, the number of experiments in housing that are taking place day to day is prodigious. They see at the end large sums of money coming out of them, although they spent some money in the beginning. If we do not develop on the lines of those experiments and trials we will not get out of the rut that we are in.

There is no question of suppressing any paper.<sup>9</sup> As I pointed out to the honourable Member this matter is being considered from the legal point of view and it becomes a little difficult if one is asked to publish all the papers in that connection. At the right time they will be placed before the House....

I regret I have heard of it only now for the first time when the honourable Member read it out.<sup>10</sup> I have neither heard of it nor know anything about it. We shall certainly consider every resolution but as to what steps we will have to take it will be for the Government to consider.

9. Kamath asked if the Government would order an enquiry and publish the report of the Mulgaonkar Committee.
10. Kamath stated that the Standing Finance Committee, under the chairmanship of the Finance Minister, had on 7 February unanimously passed severe strictures on the housing project, and asked whether the Committee's resolution would be placed before the House.

# NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

## II. The Economy

### (iii) General





## 1. Moral and Economic Regeneration<sup>1</sup>

May I urge our business community to enhance the prestige of India before the world by maintaining high public morality in the country. Whatever may be the economic system of the country or social structure, if the moral fibre of society deteriorates, the country is bound to go down.

The existence of war and tension in the world today have affected the country's economy and in turn created situations conducive to the activities of anti-social elements. The world situation and our internal difficulties are being exploited by unscrupulous elements. You may complain about controls and restrictions. We have to take careful decisions after mature thinking because the responsibility of rooting out this moral corruption that has crept into our society has become greater.

I appeal to people to build up national character and strengthen themselves internally. Our weakness today is more internal than external. No force, however great, can influence or weaken us if we are strong internally. In our history we always see that each time we fell we did so because of internal dissensions.

War has almost come to the frontiers of India. This however, does not worry us very much. What does worry us is the fact that internally we are weak. It is only our inner weakness which can destroy us. If we are strong enough ourselves, we shall be able to stand against any emergency. If we are not strong enough economically and do not cooperate with each other we will have to suffer. On the other hand, if we present a united front no outside power, however great, can divide us.

Our future is in our own hands. Whether we live or die, or whether we fall or rise, would be largely determined by our own inner strength. The next few years will be crucial in the history of our country for they would either make or break us.

People went through a lot of suffering when they were fighting for freedom, because they had a definite objective in view. If we wish to make our country great, we should know what we want in order to shape the future to our heart's desire. If, however, we quarrel among ourselves and do not have any clear objective in view, we shall become weak once again.

The moral fibre of the people has been weakened considerably as a result of the war. If we wish to survive we must regenerate our moral strength.

The country has to solve its economic problems if it wants to survive. We have a number of plans and programmes but have no financial resources to implement them. But one thing I want to emphasise is that if we want our

1. Speech at a club of the business community, Bombay, 6 November 1950. From *The Hindustan Times*, and the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 7 November 1950. Extracts.

nation to progress we must implement these economic programmes, no matter from where we get the resources. We have to follow one path—that is, to achieve economic self-sufficiency. We have no middle-of-the-road policy in regard to this. Either we do it or we quit. People have to choose whether they want us to remain in power and implement these programmes or whether they would like to have another government.

In the three years of our freedom, we have achieved some measure of greatness and gone up in the estimation of the world. We have become leaders of Asia in spite of ourselves. Probably because of our strategic importance India is a great country and is bound to influence the shape of events in the neighbouring countries. We cannot live an isolated life. We should, therefore, be strong enough to pursue what we consider to be the correct path, and not allow ourselves to be swayed by any other considerations.

World opinion pays close attention to India's views and actions. This imposes a special responsibility on India. India has, therefore, to be careful about her actions.

The future lies in our own hands. It is up to the people to build our nation or to destroy the edifice....

## 2. To C.D. Deshmukh<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
November 30, 1950

My dear Deshmukh,

You are no doubt following the news. The international situation is exceedingly grave and we appear to be moving with great rapidity towards a world war. There is the barest chance that we might escape it, but this is pretty slender. If war comes, it will probably start in the Far East. But it is very doubtful if it can be limited. Sooner or later it will spread to Europe and various other parts of the world. Indeed the moment the U.S.A. is at war with China, the situation all over the world will become exceedingly explosive. It will hardly be possible then to draw back and the world will be plunged in war. So far as we are concerned, we shall try to keep out of it. We may be benevolently neutral. Whether we can succeed ultimately in keeping out, it is impossible to say.

Obviously any such war, even though we are not directly in it, will have a powerful effect on our economy. Perhaps we might have to take some urgent

1. J.N. Collection.



steps to prevent wrong things from happening in the country. I suggest that the Finance Ministry might give some thought to this and be ready for emergencies.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 3. The Middle Way to Economic Development<sup>1</sup>

It has been a great pleasure to me to come here. I have done so chiefly because my old friend Dr Hamied<sup>2</sup> invited me and also because I consider that the chemical industry is a very important one. I have also come on a mission of curiosity and intend to find out who the chemical manufacturers of this country are and what they are doing. I have learnt something from Dr Hamied's address. Of course, I do not mean to say that I was totally unaware of their activities. Dr Hamied's address added a great deal to my knowledge of what has been done or not done and also what the Government should and should not do. He has presumably asked me and others to appreciate and admire the work of both the chemical manufacturers and the other private interests engaged in industry in India. I have no doubt that much of their work is worthy of appreciation and occasionally some might even be worthy of admiration. Perhaps, it might be said that they have not yet attained the degree of perfection at which we aim and there might be some lacuna or some lapses on their part. We have, nevertheless, to look at this problem in relation to our country's economy and her needs. We have to keep before us the problem of how to build or develop our economy and, in a smaller sense, our chemical industry as well.

Unfortunately, looking at newspaper advertisements, it appeared to me that one of the main industries in the country was the manufacture of some potent and powerful pills. Being unacquainted with the taste or effect of those pills and seeing the advertisements in the newspapers day after day, I began to dislike intensely the people who manufactured these things and advertised them so frequently. I may go a step further and say that I am a very bad product of

1. Address at the eleventh annual general meeting of the Indian Chemical Manufacturers' Association, New Delhi, 26 December 1950. From a report of the meeting issued by the Indian Chemical Manufacturers' Association, Calcutta, and *Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches*, Volume Two (June 1967), Publications Division, Government of India.
2. Khwaja Abdul Hamied, President of the Indian Chemical Manufacturers' Association for 1949-50, presided over the meeting.



the pharmaceutical age, because I have hardly ever taken any medicine, pills or drugs. However, I have no doubt that other people stand in need of them and I have no desire to deprive them of these.

Dr Hamied has referred to some larger questions. He has laid down some excellent maxims and some extraordinary maxims. He has stated as an obvious fact which admits of no dispute or argument that private enterprise can be equated with democracy and that totalitarianism and nationalization are the same. It is for the first time that I have heard such a viewpoint. I am not going to enter into any controversy about this or about what he called the dual policy of the Government. Obviously, he wants us either to plump for absolute free enterprise or for hundred per cent nationalization.

I am afraid Dr Hamied is out of touch with what is happening in the world. There is no country in the world where the free enterprise of his dream exists. It does not exist even in the United States of America which are the high priests of free enterprise. On the contrary, it grows lesser and lesser there in spite of that country's policies and aims. World conditions and other forces compel every country today to progress in a certain direction, whether it wants to or not.

There are countries like Soviet Russia and some others which have gone a long way in creating a State which is in complete control of industry. Everything else is also State-controlled. Dr Hamied wants us to choose between Soviet Russia and something which does not exist anywhere in the world. That is a very hard choice indeed and I do not see why I should be forced to make it. It is inevitable that any country which does not want either of the two extremes must find a middle way. In that middle way, there is bound to be more emphasis on some factors than on others but obviously a middle way or a mixed economy, if you would like to call it that, is inevitable.

Now that is not a dogma or an axiom which can be applied to any country regardless of its conditions. It will have to be decided by each country individually with regard to its particular conditions. What may be suitable for India might not be suitable, let us say, for Burma or Afghanistan or a country in Europe. We have to base our actions on objective facts and our capacities. We cannot certainly think of the conditions in another country in terms of what is happening in India. Nor can we think in this country in terms of what is happening in the United States. We must take into consideration the facts that are peculiar to and govern a particular situation.

The United States of America have had 150 years of consolidation and growth and their capacity for production today is colossal. All kinds of economic forces which have little relationship with the old idea of capitalism are active in that country. Of course, America is a capitalist country and she is proud of being one. But the fact is that modern capitalism in the United States of America is vastly different from what it was twenty or thirty or forty years ago. It

changes. Economics tend to move in a particular direction with a momentum of their own. I was told the other day by some one who knows — I have no idea how far the figures are correct — that one person in every five in the United States of America is in some kind of State employment. That is a prodigious number and America, mind you, is a capitalist and not a socialist State. The fact that one person in five is in State employment in a capitalist country shows how the nature of the capitalist State is changing. This means that a country where conditions are different and where the stresses of modern life are greater has undergone changes.

In England, there has also been a considerable change. If Dr Hamied's axiom were to be stated in England, I should like to know what would the response be from the people, from Parliament or from the Government. England is obviously pursuing a socialist policy and has been pursuing it with considerable courage during the last four or five years since the War ended.

So the problem is not a simple one. There are in this world various policies, ideologies and theories. I suppose there is some truth in each of them. However, my personal feeling is that while it is very important to have a theory as the logical basis of our thought, it is not reasonable to apply it by force to all conditions. We can use a theory for the purpose of argument and for testing its validity. In practice, however, you have to take the facts of the situation and adapt either yourself or your theory accordingly. Most countries have to do it. If I may say so, even Soviet Russia, which seeks to base herself on a very hard and rigid theory of Marxism, interprets Marxism in a manner that suits her. The result is that her brand of Marxism has little to do with Marx. I am quite certain that Marx would be astonished if he were to see the various interpretations of his theory. Whether you approve of this or not is immaterial. The important point is that Russians, in their own way, are hard realists and continue to adapt their policy to what they consider for the moment good for their country or their party. Of course, they always give it a colour and a cloak of being within the four corners of Marxism, because they have been talking about it for so long.

Coming to India, we have to consider things as they are. We cannot lay down any slogan or watchword and try to force it through to its logical conclusion. Whether it is in India or anywhere else, only those methods and policies will succeed which deliver the goods. There are no other tests. Broadly speaking, the present conflict is between the various forces represented by communism on the one side and on the other by something to which I cannot quite give a name. I cannot call it capitalism because it has all kinds of variations. What is really developing in the world is some kind of democratic socialism. It is developing gradually and in varying degrees. Whatever the two conflicting forces may be, their real test is not going to be on the battlefield. They are ultimately going to be tested by the results achieved.



We should try to understand our problems in as realistic a manner as possible, avoiding for the moment words which have long histories behind them and which confuse the mind. When such words as capitalism, socialism, communism or any other 'ism' are thrown about as arguments, we get lost. Passions are aroused and the hard facts are ignored. A person who calls himself a socialist naturally has a certain general outlook and a certain set of objectives. Another person may have quite a different point of view. If you put these two persons together, they hurl harsh words at each other and nothing results. If, on the other hand, they sat down together and said, 'Well, here is a job to be done,' something might result. Here in India, there is so much we want—food, clothing, housing, education, health—in fact, all the important things of life. How are we to get them? Surely, not by shouting slogans or passing resolutions about socialism or capitalism or any other 'ism'. We will have to produce the goods and distribute them properly. We must think how best to do it.

Now, capitalism has under certain circumstances the capacity to produce tremendously. That capacity of capitalism itself has changed and it has been changing. There is no doubt that American capitalism has an amazing capacity for production; in fact, it is colossal. And, as I said, the United States of America have had 150 years to achieve it. They had a vast territory with huge economic resources. They had opportunity without the background of conflict which other countries had to reckon with. They had neither a very heavy population nor the relics of a feudal age. It was a new country with enormous space and it developed to its present level in 150 years. It is thus rather absurd to say, 'Do what had been done in America.' I would like to do it in my own way but how can I do it? I do not have the 150 years or even 100 years to settle down and grow as America did. I have neither that enormous space nor that invaluable freedom from conflict and trouble from outside. I have neither that much time nor the same opportunity. India is a big country with a background of all kinds of conflict. Many kinds of forces are at play. I have got to solve my problems in the immediate present or in the near future, not in the next hundred years. Private enterprise in America developed gradually till it built up for itself a very strong position with enormous resources. Has private enterprise in India got the capacity or the ability or the resources to do that? It has ability and it has resources but it just has not the strength or capacity to solve the situation by itself. It is a patent fact that you just cannot do it. Is our private enterprise going to take up our river valley schemes? It cannot, because they are too big for it. These schemes cannot pay dividends quickly. You have to wait for years and years. Therefore, the State inevitably has to take them up. In America, the railways are owned by private companies. Here we own the railways. Are we not told, 'All this dislocates business. Let private enterprise have full play'? If private enterprise has full play, one of the first casualties in this country will be private enterprise itself. To be frank with you—I am talking



in general terms—private enterprise in this country is not wise enough. It may be clever in making money but it just is not wise enough. It does not see what is happening all round. It does not see a world in turmoil and change but sees it in terms of an age that is dead and gone.

It so happens—and it amazes me—that here in India, in spite of enormous difficulties, we have conflicts and all kinds of unhelpful criticism and condemnation of the Government. That very fact symbolizes a certain state of affairs in India and an attitude in the minds of her people which is far from proper. There is no doubt about it. When we talk of something critical like the food situation, for instance, we use strong language without showing any awareness of the crisis. We live our lives in the same old way and though large numbers of people suffer in the country for lack of food, lack of shelter or lack of other things, most of us, especially those of us who criticize, lead our lives unaffected anyway. Asia and, in fact, the whole world is passing through a crisis, but we have no sense of urgency or crisis. Unfortunately, this want of understanding of what is happening all round us is not good because then realization sometimes comes as a shock. We have to take the problems of India and look at them in the context of the world. Let us deal with them as realistically as possible, having certain aims and objectives, trying to go towards them, adapting our policies with a view to realizing those objectives, without arguing so much and without having recourse to slogans or set terms.

The only objective that you can set before you in the modern world is a widespread raising of the standard of living of the people. It is not the only objective but others are subject to it. No government can afford to ignore the urges of the common people. After all, democracy has its basis on those very urges and if any government flouts them, it is pushed aside and other governments take over. They may be better or worse. That is immaterial.

Dr Hamied, in his address, criticized heavy taxation on the one hand and on the other called upon the Government to provide certain urgently needed things like a synthetic petrol plant which would cost thirty or forty crores. How can we reduce the revenue by lessening the taxes and still do everything that is necessary? I do not understand this. Naturally, there is a limit to our capacity to do things and there is a limit to taxation. We cannot go beyond that without disturbing the whole structure of our economy. Important things have certainly to be done and if enough money is not forthcoming, those things are not done.

I should like you, gentlemen, to look at this picture and balance things. I want you to realize that in the modern age it is not possible to go back to the old days of a dead world. No country in the wide world can go back to those days. If you think in terms of going back then you are thinking in a vacuum and that is unreal thinking. How far the State can or should come in or how far there should be cooperation are matters for consideration but the real test

is results which are not the accumulation of private fortunes but the advancement of the public generally.

#### 4. The First Five Year Plan<sup>1</sup>

Sir, in view of the interest that this House and the country take in the work of the Planning Commission, it might be advantageous for me to take this opportunity to make a short statement about the programme of work on which the Planning Commission is at present engaged. This will give a better idea to the House of our work than a brief answer to the question that the honourable Member has put.<sup>2</sup> With your permission, Sir, therefore, I propose to make this statement.

The House will recall that a few months ago the Commission requested State Governments to prepare plans of development for the two years, 1951–52 and 1952–53, and, in broader outline, for the period of five years ending 1955–56. Development plans have recently been received from most of the State Governments and the Central Ministries. These plans are being studied, and the Commission hopes to suggest detailed priorities to the Central Government and the States, and also to indicate the levels to which financial resources may be raised during the next few years by the Centre and by the various Part A and Part B States towards the implementation of the national plan. Before the Commission makes its recommendations to individual State Governments, it intends to hold discussions with each of them on the basis of its assessment of their financial position and resources and their programmes of development. Before the plan is finalised, it is also hoped to make arrangements for consultation between the Planning Commission and Members of Parliament who are specially interested in planning. Discussions with State Governments will begin shortly and will extend over a few weeks. It is expected that the Commission's report will be presented to Government towards the end of May.

The Plan under preparation covers a period of five years, but it is proposed later to extend it to the sixth year, so as to correspond with the period of the

1. Statement in Parliament, 19 February 1951. *Parliamentary Debates, Official Report*, 1951, Vol. VI, Part I, cols 1539–1541.
2. H.V. Kamath asked Nehru whether the Planning Commission had finalised the First Five Year Plan and whether the blueprint of the Plan would be laid on the Table of the House. He also wished to know the date on which the Plan was likely to be put into operation, and whether the States had been directed to set up regional planning boards in order to give effect to and coordinate the overall Plan.



Colombo Plan. The Commission's report is likely to cover a wide field. It will make an assessment of the country's resources, including financial resources, and the extent to which they may be developed. It will contain the Commission's recommendations on questions of national policy bearing on improvements in public administration, machinery for the execution of plans at the Centre and in the States, public cooperation, reorganisation of the system of agriculture, development of cottage and small-scale industries, the future organisation of industry, conservation of mineral resources, development of irrigation and power, the system of education and the extension of social services. It will also present an integrated programme of development in the public sector extending both to the Centre and the States. As regards the private sector, development programmes for individual industries are being worked out in consultation with the representatives of the industries concerned. A number of industries have been studied and the Commission's proposals for their development are expected to be submitted about the same time as its main report. The development programme for coal has already been submitted to Government. Its proposals for other industries will be made later after the discussions have been completed.

Government hope that Parliament will be able to consider the report of the Planning Commission during the next session.





# NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

## III. Relief and Rehabilitation





## 1. To Ajit Prasad Jain<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
November 19, 1950

My dear Ajit,<sup>2</sup>

Dharma Vira<sup>3</sup> placed before me the papers about the shops in the Agra Shoe Market, with a note of his own which he has written after his talk with you. I confess that I am not at all satisfied. More and more I am surprised at the way our Custodians are behaving. We seem to have created a monster in the shape of this organisation of large numbers of Custodians which goes in its own way regardless of Government's policy. Surely, this kind of thing should not be allowed to continue. This can only bring Government into disrepute because the assurances they give are not kept.

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Here is this particular matter in which I was, to some extent, concerned and much more so Maulana Sahib.<sup>4</sup> All kind of assurances were given. I am now told that various difficulties arose or something happened and they have decided otherwise. I was not aware of the fact that Custodians have become something above the Government of India, and I am not prepared to have a word of mine upset or a colleague of mine like Maulana Sahib to feel that he has been put in a false position.

I know this is not your fault at all, but we must do something about this matter, as well as the larger matter of the way Custodians behave generally. This matter of the eleven shops must be gone into and settled according to Government's previous assurances. If the local Custodian cannot do it, then the U.P. and Agra Custodians should both be asked to come here with the relevant papers to see me. If necessary, the law will have to be changed.

I realise your difficulties perfectly and would like to help you in dealing

## 2. Need for an Egalitarian Outlook<sup>1</sup>

The results achieved by the Government in rehabilitating displaced persons in this country have been commendable and something to be proud of; in fact they compare very favourably with what has been achieved in other parts of the world. The list of what the Government has not done is also formidable and it is quite easy for any one, including ourselves, to criticise it and feel unhappy about it.

The problem of rehabilitation has to be viewed against the background not only of enormous and very complicated problems that have arisen ever since independence and Partition but of dwindling resources just at the time when the Government need them for development. We have to face these problems at the worst possible moment but, however difficult, one has to face them and overcome them.

The first thing the Government aimed at when the flood of refugees came to India was somehow to give them food and shelter. The second problem was to keep them going in some organised way in big camps. The third problem was to settle them gradually on land and elsewhere.

This process has been going on in the Punjab and elsewhere in relation to refugees from West Pakistan. Just about the time the Government had controlled that situation more or less, the situation in Eastern Pakistan changed and another flood came. Fortunately, conditions in relation to that migration have improved greatly. In the course of the last two or three months, there has been a strong flow-back, which continues from day to day. Almost every day there is an excess of about 1,500 and sometimes 2,000 persons going back to East Bengal, whatever the reasons. The flow-back should be welcomed for a variety of reasons and certainly has been a great relief to the Rehabilitation Ministry.

One obvious thing to do in rehabilitation is not to try to reproduce the kind of structure or system which has shown cracks and requires change but rather try to make a beginning in a new social reorganisation insofar as it is possible. I am afraid that though such ideas floated about in the minds of many people, no real attempt has been made about trying them. Conservatism held the field. Vested interests held the field. We paid more attention to the man of money who had come across, had rights of property and shouted for compensation than to reorganisation on a real basis.

I have the strongest objection to the use of the word compensation in this connection except in the sense of compensating with the property left in India

1. Address to the Rehabilitation Conference, New Delhi, 11 December 1950. From the *National Herald*, 12 December 1950. The Conference was attended by the Rehabilitation Ministers, Chief Commissioners or other representatives from the States.



by Muslim evacuees and what India might possibly get from Pakistan in future in a Government-to-Government settlement. The approach should be one of rehabilitation of the people who are suffering. The Government cannot give compensation to one person and allow ten or hundred persons to be unprovided for.

The Government are facing enormous difficulties so far as their normal revenue is concerned. Obviously, the Finance Ministry is interested in raising as much money as possible by loans or taxation both for rehabilitation as well as other work. How far it can go will depend on all manner of circumstances, but it cannot go beyond certain limits.

There has been talk about a capital levy.<sup>2</sup> A capital levy is an old socialist idea of taxing heavily not the income but the capital resources of the nation and using the money realised for the development of the nation. It is an excellent idea but the socialists themselves are giving it up because they realise the practical difficulties.

I can understand a special tax either for a special purpose or for general purposes. It then becomes a part of the larger scheme of taxation. I am all for the rich paying and I think the sooner these enormous differences in income disappear, the better it is for the society and for a nation's growth. But one cannot by shouting slogans and words either solve the problem or even get the money. So the problem is not one of capital levy but of taxing to the best possible extent without drying up the source of taxation.

In our programmes of rehabilitation, our outlook, I fear, has not been what might be called an egalitarian outlook. It has definitely been giving more to those who have and less to those who have not. I suppose our society is conditioned this way and we cannot help it, but there should be limits.

The result is that the man who had land in Pakistan gets land in India; we do not grudge that at all. But what of the poor man, a poor Harijan or somebody else there who had been a hewer of wood or drawer of water? That simply means that you are trying to perpetuate conditions which were, generally speaking, to be got rid of. We have a chance in this change-over somehow of removing that difference. No doubt to some extent we have tried but not to the extent we might have.

The larger problem of rehabilitation must revolve round wealth-producing activities and nothing else. Our job must be to produce conditions whereby they become wealth-producing units. Unfortunately, we have been obsessed by the petty shopkeeper mentality. I have nothing against petty shopkeepers but a nation does not go ahead by petty shopkeeping. It goes ahead by producing

2. The All India Refugees Conference meeting at New Delhi in July 1950 had suggested imposition of a capital levy on private property throughout the country to provide relief and compensation to the refugees.



goods, not changing them from pocket to pocket at a higher price. It is this productive activity that is most important. That has no doubt been stressed but I do not think it has been adequately stressed or adequately appreciated by a large number of displaced persons.

A very large number of displaced persons from West Pakistan have probably more initiative than people from the rest of India. Probably others would not have established themselves as many of the displaced persons from West Pakistan have done. Therefore, in what I say I am only emphasising the psychological aspect of the problem. There is no other way for this country than that of hard work and production, whether there is capitalism, socialism, communism or Gandhism.

The Nilokheri experiment<sup>3</sup> is a mighty experiment. Its success is to be judged not only by the number of persons rehabilitated but by the type of cooperative effort involved and the psychological value it has. The country needs a psychology of work, enthusiasm and energy and a place like Nilokheri provides such a psychology of energy, enthusiasm and optimism. The country should have ten thousand such Nilokheris. From the financial point of view it is a self-sufficient scheme. Something like Nilokheri is being built at Fulia<sup>4</sup> in West Bengal. Bengal is a supreme example of amazing capacity normally frustrated for lack of opportunity and it is, therefore, exceedingly important that such a scheme should be started in West Bengal.

The first emphasis must be given to rehabilitation of the young boys and girls. I have no doubt that a great deal has been done for children but I must confess all the same that the emphasis on them has not been as great as I would like — on their education and general upkeep or even their food. I do feel that in all your schemes of rehabilitation, children, both boys and girls, must have top priority.

Under existing conditions, unfortunately, women require a little more looking after than men. Normally they get less looking after than the men. I am not happy about the conception of isolated homes for women and orphans. They must not be isolated completely. They must be made to feel as normal human beings.

I am sorry that the Rehabilitation Ministry's experiment in training social workers has failed. The idea must not be given up.

I imagine that in ten years from now the Rehabilitation Ministry will change its character and become what might be called a social affairs ministry, dealing not only with the relics of rehabilitation but with the larger problem from the

3. A rehabilitation scheme comprising a township for ten thousand displaced persons from West Pakistan was started in 1948 at Nilokheri near Kurukshetra, 110 kms from New Delhi. The refugees themselves were to build the township, helped by small loans from the Centre.

4. A refugee township to resettle five thousand persons was being built at Fulia.

social point of view. After all, these children who are growing up require some kind of care for a long time so that the scope of the Ministry should later be widened into a permanent social affairs ministry.

India has tried hard to come to a settlement with Pakistan both on the evacuees property and canal waters disputes with no success whatever. Our latest proposal is for the appointment of a tribunal. It has not been accepted so that we are up against a blank wall. No doubt the talks will continue and conferences will take place but, generally speaking, we have to proceed on the basis of things as they are and try to make the best of them.

A strange complication appears to have arisen because of the evacuees property laws in regard to Muslim property owners in India or Muslim nationals. These laws are completely unique and are the product of very peculiar circumstances. They go against some of the fundamental principles of the Constitution, although there is legal provision enabling the Government to do so. In fact, last April I discussed the problem with Mr Liaquat Ali Khan and we were generally of opinion that the sooner these laws were wiped off the statute book the better. There was a proposal for the fixing of a date beyond which no further action would be taken but there were certain complications and we decided to look at the matter again. The evacuees property laws should be interpreted as generously as possible. Wherever there is a doubt, the doubt should always be resolved in favour of the person who suffers because of this.

### 3. To Ajit Prasad Jain<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

February 6, 1951

My dear Ajit,

The enclosed papers were sent to you, I think, but they came back to me rather quickly.

I am rather troubled about this matter. We take all the trouble to train social workers and then say that they are not needed, or that they are not good enough. Obviously social workers are needed for the kind of work we have to do. If they did not fit in, it is either the fault of their training or the fault of those who were supposed to use them. I am inclined to think that it is at least partly the fault of the latter.

I believe you have said that these people should be absorbed as clerks, etc. That means a complete waste of the training they have received. I remember laying the greatest stress on several occasions on the necessity of social workers.

1. File No. 2(459)/49-PMS.



It was at my instance largely that this experiment was tried and I feel therefore concerned about it. I have no doubt that social workers are necessary and we have very few such trained persons. I have been suggesting that the Tata School of Social Work<sup>2</sup> should be enlarged.

With all this background, you can appreciate my disappointment at the turn events have taken. I can understand some persons not proving fit. But I can hardly understand that the whole lot have proved a failure. There must be something wrong about the system which cannot absorb or utilise properly persons who have been given training in social work. I do not know if you can do anything in the matter. But I should like you to think about it.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. The Tata Graduate School of Social Work was founded in Bombay in 1936 and later renamed the Tata Institute of Social Sciences.



**NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION**  
**IV. Scientific Research**



## 1. A Vision of the Future<sup>1</sup>

Mr Chairman,<sup>2</sup>

I have come to Jamshedpur after many years—eleven and a half to be accurate. The first time I came to Jamshedpur was, I believe, nearly thirty years ago. Since then I have had to come, I have come here from time to time, and I have seen this city grow and I have occasionally visited the great Steel Works here, and I have felt attracted to it, in that way, more than to any other part of India. I wander about India a great deal, and wherever I go some kind of a picture of the part of that city or of that part of India comes up before me. Because my mind is filled with galleries of pictures of India in the past and in the present, and so wherever I go, some part of this, part of India, as related to that particular city or area, comes up before me. But when I come to Jamshedpur, it is not the part of India that comes up before me, but some vision of the future comes before my eyes. So I said that when I come here, I feel attracted to Jamshedpur in a different way. Because the problem before me, and before many of us who think about these problems, is how, in what manner, to combine what is of value in the past of India with what we hope for in the future. That is the great problem perhaps, not only of India but of other countries also, but in particular for us who have a measure of responsibility cast upon us in the present. We have to think of the past and the future, balancing ourselves on that razor's edge of the present.

So I am happy to be here today for a variety of reasons. First, because it is a long time since I came to Jamshedpur, and I have wanted to come here often enough during this period. Secondly, for this special occasion, the opening of another of our great national laboratories.<sup>3</sup>

My name has been associated, to some extent, with the opening of these laboratories or with the Department of Scientific Research,<sup>4</sup> but as a matter of fact, it is a very formal association, as you well know. The real burden of the work has fallen on others. Nevertheless, it has been a privilege to have one's name associated with this great work that is being done in India. And insofar as I have been able, I have tried to help it, not to the extent I would have liked to, for unfortunately it is becoming increasingly difficult for us to give effect to our wishes and desires because of the limitation of our resources at the

1. Address at the opening of the National Metallurgical Laboratory, Jamshedpur, 26 November 1950. A.I.R. tapes, N.M.M.L.
2. J.R.D. Tata.
3. This laboratory was the fifth in the chain of national laboratories. The Government of India spent Rs 38 lakhs on its establishment, while Rs 13 lakhs were collected as donations.
4. The Department was under Nehru's charge from 15 August 1947.



present day. And so, it is sad for all of us to have great dreams of what we want to do, and what we should do, and then have to smother them for the moment at least. But still, in spite of these difficulties and limitations, it might be said that, in a measure, scientific research has advanced in India.

Now, coming to Jamshedpur and opening this great Laboratory, I think of the combination of this Laboratory with the great Steel Works in this city, of the marriage of science with industry for the progress of both. Now, neither this Laboratory nor any other by itself signifies progress. It is the tools out of which progress can come, and it depends on those who use these tools as to how far progress can come. What is the measure of progress, I do not know. You can define it in a multitude of ways, but today in India, at any rate, we can think of it only in one precise way, one urgent way: how we can deal with the urgent problems insofar as they affect our people, our hundreds of millions. It is they who count, and nobody else counts in the ultimate analysis. And if anything that we do does not, directly or indirectly, affect their lives and hopes, and what they live for and what they hope for, then that is not progress, although ultimately it may lead to progress. I say that, well realising that even so far as science is concerned, we must give it a free hand to grow, unattached and not tied to any particular problem. Even so, and in giving it that free hand, science grows and benefits humanity. I realize that perfectly, but for the moment, and realizing it, I do wish to give it a free hand. Nevertheless, I want to tell you, and I want to tell the scientists present here, that the burden of today is a great burden and we have to meet that burden as brave men and not think of other things but try to solve it so far as we can, whether it is the burden of providing food to our millions or whether it is the burden of providing something else which they lack.

So this marriage of science and industry is important. Because that means that we utilize science to the immediate advantage of the betterment of our people, and that is typified by this Metallurgical Laboratory being situated here in this city of Jamshedpur. I said that these laboratories do not signify progress in themselves, but they are the foundations of progress. I do believe that there can be no real progress either in this country or in any other part of the world without its being founded and based on science, on the scientific application to many things in life, and, if I may say so further, on the scientific temper of the minds of people. And the last perhaps is as important as any other, because science represents, I hope, not only the devoted study of a particular subject, the devoted search for truth, but in the process, it produces a dispassionate mind, it makes a person study objectively, it prevents an individual or a group being swept away by momentary passion and it thinks and it rejects mercilessly anything that it considers wrong or untruthful. If that is the true temper of the mind of the scientist, and of science, well, we find it less and less in the world today. Science grows, industry grows, great scientific laboratories



AT THE OPENING OF THE NATIONAL METALLURGICAL LABORATORY, JAMSHEDPUR, 26 NOVEMBER 1950





AT THE NATIONAL METALLURGICAL LABORATORY, JAMSHEDPUR,  
26 NOVEMBER 1950



grow in the great countries of the West, and the East to some extent, and yet somehow or other, in spite of that growth of science, the temper of science grows less and less.

It is a curious thing and, as our Director<sup>5</sup> of this Laboratory just stated, science, well, may be used for good purposes or bad. That is true. Now, when I think of these laboratories, I think primarily because of this urgency of the moment. I think of how far they can solve our present-day problems and help us to meet the needs of our people. I think of many other things too, but I think also that with a large number of our bright young men and young women working in these laboratories, they will help gradually to spread the temper of science, the temper of dispassionate study, the temper of the search for truth, regardless of consequences. That is so much needed not only in this country, but in every country today.

Now we are an ancient country, and old countries have great privileges and great drawbacks and great failings. We carry a very heavy burden of the past and the past helps us, but it also hinders us. And always the problem is, as I said earlier, how to combine that past with the present and the future, how to have change and how to have continuity, and how to have both together. Continuity demands bits of the past, large chunks of the past, if you like, going on. Change demands a break from the past. You may have too much of continuity, which means no change, which means a static condition and stagnation and death. You may have changed, changed too much, which means a complete break from the past, and thereby perhaps you may gain something; I do not know but it is much more likely that you lose a great deal. After all what are we today, you and I and all of us, wherever we might be? We are the ultimate products of this past behind us: whatever culture we have, whatever science we have, whatever in any way the world possesses today, the way of thought or writing or action or deed, it is the accumulation of the past, accumulated up to this present, that pinnacle on which we stand, the pinnacle of the present, and to ignore that past and to throw it away is to throw away the whole fundamental on which we have grown. So we cannot do that. But also what we cannot do is to consider that a permanent basis for us is to sit and not to go forward or upward for if we do so then we forget the one lesson that life ought to teach: that life changes, always changes, minute by minute and second by second, and the only changeless thing, and even that is not changeless no doubt, is death. But anyhow it is the end of life, and a nation which does not, which is not prepared to change, is a nation which goes straight to stagnation and decay. So the problem is the problem of continuity, and yet there is the problem of change and continuous change. Whether we can solve it, I do not know, and I hope we try, we shall try to do so and I hope we shall succeed.

Dr Bhatnagar told you of that replica of the Asoka Pillar that we have to put up here or the people of Jamshedpur have put up here.<sup>6</sup> It is a noble symbol of many things and perhaps you know that we as a country have adopted that top, the capital of that pillar, as our crest and symbol.<sup>7</sup> We did that after a long fight and deliberately. That pillar, the original one, was put up about 2,200 years ago by one of the greatest sons of India, Asoka. I might tell you that the wheel on the capital of the pillar which is known as Asoka *chakra* was never used as a symbol of military might, but was a symbol of peace and righteousness. It was a symbol of scientific and industrial progress that we had in India. It also served as an inspiration to those who wanted to combine the past and the future of India.

Sometimes, facing the problems of the nation and of the world, one suffers heart-break. But, at any rate, when I think of this magnificent chain of laboratories, national laboratories, that has grown up in India and all the fine bodies of men and women who are working there, I feel hopeful and glad and so it is in a spirit of hope and in a spirit of faith for the future that I shall open this new national laboratory.

6. A replica of the Asoka Pillar, cast by the workers of the National Metallurgical Laboratory of India, was installed "as a symbol of the science and industry of India in the past, a token of the present and as an inspiration for the future." The wording of the inscription was Nehru's.
7. The State emblem of India is an adaptation from the lion capital of the Asoka Pillar at Sarnath, near Varanasi, in Uttar Pradesh.

## 2. The Need for Scientific Research<sup>1</sup>

Your Highness,<sup>2</sup> Mr President<sup>3</sup> and friends,

I have to face an initial difficulty, and that is this, that while your Highness has asked me to inaugurate this conference, at the same time it has been hinted to me that it would be better if I restrain myself at this stage and spoke later.<sup>4</sup> So it has been decided, and I hope you will agree with this that I should

1. Inaugural address at the thirty-eighth session of the Indian Science Congress and the first session of the Pan Indian Ocean Science Congress, Bangalore, 2 January 1951. A.I.R. tapes, N.M.M.L. See also the next item.
2. The Maharaja of Mysore.
3. P.C. Mahalanobis was deputising for Homi Bhabha.
4. Nehru subsequently inaugurated the Electrical Communications Engineering Department of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. See the next item.



to a large extent restrain myself for the present. I shall just say a few words in order to inaugurate the conference. That means, in a sense, that two speeches are inflicted upon you by me.

I should just like to say at this stage how happy I am to be here at the session of the Science Congress and, as your Highness has said, I made a rather special effort to come here and I am leaving within a few hours for England.<sup>5</sup>

I want to tell you, as you must know, that certain changes have taken place recently in the Central Government. Perhaps you know that a new Ministry called the Ministry of Natural Resources and Scientific Research<sup>6</sup> has been started. That itself, I hope, will be welcome to this Congress and the eminent scientists who are here. Ever since my association with the Government I have felt the need for encouraging scientific research and scientific work and have for that purpose associated myself with various important organizations like the Board of Scientific and Industrial Research,<sup>7</sup> of which I was and am the Chairman. I have also been closely associated with the Atomic Energy Commission.<sup>8</sup> Well, none of you need think that that means that I know very much about science or atomic energy. But I felt, and others agreed with me, that it is helpful sometimes for me to play the part of a show-boy and my association, therefore, did help these organizations in their dealings with Government. I have also been, during these past three years, Minister-in-charge of Scientific Research. Now that a new Ministry of Natural Resources and Scientific Research has been formed, that will include, of course, the Department of Scientific Research plus also many other important departments and activities and my very old friend and colleague Shri Sri Prakasa will be in charge of it. That does not mean that I cease to be in-charge of anything, and in a sense, if I may say so with all respect to my colleague, Sri Prakasaji, my overall charge of scientific work continues and I propose to continue to take deep interest in it.

My interest, as I said, largely consists in trying to make the Indian people, and even the Government of India, conscious of scientific work and the necessity for it, because really the work is not done by me but by the eminent men, my colleagues, who are sitting round about here and who have helped in giving such a great place to science in India. So, I wish to assure you that so far as I am concerned I shall help in every way the progress of scientific research and the applications of science to our problems in India.

5. Nehru was on his way to London to attend the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference from 4 to 12 January 1951.
6. It was constituted on 26 December 1950 with Sri Prakasa as the Minister in charge.
7. Set up in 1940. Nehru became its Chairman in 1947.
8. The Atomic Energy Commission was set up in August 1948, directly in charge of the Prime Minister, with Bhabha as Chairman.



Dr Bhatnagar has been very intimately connected with all this work, as Secretary of the Department of Scientific Research. He will continue that association but in a larger field now, and I am quite sure that that will also be of great benefit to science. I am particularly happy to be here today because this session of the Science Congress is going to be presided over by my dear friend and colleague, Dr Bhabha. It is not for me to tell you of not only his achievement but his promise for the future, which are both great. But it has been a great pleasure for me to work with him in various ways and more especially in the Atomic Energy Commission. I now proceed to inaugurate the thirty-eighth session of the Indian Science Congress and the first session of the Pan Indian Ocean Science Congress.

### 3. Scientists and Human Problems<sup>1</sup>

Your Highness, Mr President and friends,

I have yet to perform another opening ceremony. That will be done at a distance, and I will turn a switch on here to open the new Electrical Communications Engineering building, of which two years ago, I am reminded, I laid the foundation stone. Well, I shall do so. We have just been listening to Dr Homi Bhabha's address,<sup>2</sup> and no doubt all of you found it very interesting as I did. All these are very fascinating subjects and yet I was trying to correlate what he said on the subject to the kind of problems we have to face. I am quite certain that these things are not unrelated to each other, although the relation may not be obvious. But then, today, when we have to face all kinds of rather urgent and immediate problems, how exactly do we bring about this correlation, not only in regard to this particular subject, but in regard to almost all your activities of scientific research, to the problems of the day? Now, I have the greatest admiration for what might be called pure research, and I think that is essential and out of it come many practical applications ultimately, even though they might not have been previously thought of. So it is not with any idea of, well, lessening the importance of pure research that I say that inevitably a person like me, who is concerned with day-to-day problems of great importance, has always to think a little less of pure research but more of the applications of research to the problems of the human society. More particularly today, that is, in the

1. Speech while inaugurating the Electrical Communications Engineering Department of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, 2 January 1951. A.I.R. tapes, N.M.M.L.
2. Bhabha spoke in his address of the changing concepts in the physical sciences.

present context of things, one has to think exactly where we are heading in the world and what science has to offer in regard to it. Science certainly has done much to make conditions more difficult, that is to say, make the possibilities of war far more terrible than at any time previously. Now, the scientist, as a scientist I suppose, is not entirely a human being. That is to say, he pursues truth regardless of where he might reach, regardless even of humanitarian considerations. And that is right, because it is no good trying to become sentimental at the cost of truth; that would not lead you anywhere. But the fact remains that if a human society is to survive, we have to look at it as a human society and not as an abstraction.

Some of you, gentlemen, who have come from foreign countries and have been here a day or two in Bangalore, or elsewhere in India, well, have seen something of the face of India; a little, a very little. You may have seen even in Bangalore large numbers of our people and formed some impressions about them. I do not know what your impressions are. But I have innumerable impressions of the face of India, and the faces of her people, and all the time I am oppressed by the thought of these people, of what one should do for them, what they want, and what they need immediately. If you saw them yesterday, a fairly considerable number of them, after we arrived here, you would have seen their enthusiasm, their cheerful faces, the bright-eyed children, and all that, as I saw them, and although I have seen this thing any number of times in the last thirty years or so it always moves me greatly. It moves me for a variety of reasons, because my life and our lives have been wrapped up with these people's lives and their hopes and fears in a large measure. Also for a personal reason, because they have done me the very great honour of putting their faith in me and showing their affection for me. Now that is a great burden, if I may say so. Naturally, that is a thing which gives one great pleasure but it is a very great burden which one does not quite know how to discharge. Always their problems are before me. How can we—all of us—be worthy of that faith? How can we discharge that responsibility? How can we open the gates of opportunity to these people who have had so little of opportunity in their lives thus far? And I think of how our energies can be diverted to their betterment. I am thinking of the world at the present moment moving in the ways of destruction and other ways not likely to bring any profit to humanity. I suggest all this to you because you as scientists are very intimately concerned with this problem. You may indulge in pure science or applied science. You as human beings cannot escape it, but even more so as scientists, you should consider this matter. It is a grave matter affecting all of us, all over the world.

It is a strange thing that here we meet and eminent scientists come from different parts of the world, and for the moment you forget your national boundaries and you confer together as colleagues and co-workers in the cause



of truth, in the cause of human progress, and you achieve certain results. And yet, somehow or other, national barriers come in—national hatreds and animosities and ambitions—and they not only come in the way of your work but destroy much that you do. Now, how are we to meet this situation? I am a politician and I have to deal with these problems from day to day. I have to deal with human beings in the mass as well as individual human passions, and it amazes me how utterly irrational human beings are both as individuals and in the mass. We, well, call ourselves scientists living in a scientific age and all the world today knows what science can do. Nevertheless, it is astonishing how far from what might be called the scientific temper or scientific outlook we are, all of us, whatever we might be, although we might profit by the latest advances of science.

Now, that means that there is a kind of a race between the good effects of science, which are obvious, and the evil effects of scientific development, not of science but of scientific application, which are equally obvious. And one does not quite know which will win in the end. To have any purpose in life is almost becoming, if I may say so, an act of faith, because one does not see much logic about it, from the way men behave, nations behave, statesmen behave. It is not a mere question for the politician but a question for the scientist. So, how are we to deal with this, not on the political plane—leave that to the politicians—but on the scientific plane, because men of science are presumed to be dispassionate and objective observers, are presumed to have some poise and not to allow themselves to be swept away by passions and prejudices. How are you, then, going to deal with the situation? You may, of course, serve your various States in various activities and sometimes your abilities are taken advantage of by the State for purposes which probably you do not approve of or admire. In other words, you are exploited for wrong ends by the State, and yet it is very difficult for you, of course, to do much about it, because the machine of the State becomes bigger and bigger. We may call it democracy or we may call it by some other name, but it is a huge machine with its own momentum which goes this way or that way and carries everybody with it, whether they want to or not. Now, I am not offering any kind of a solution to you of this problem, but I do feel that every thinking human being, and more specially every scientist, should consider this as a primary problem, how to deal with this, not particular political questions of the day—I am not talking about that—but rather with the approach to such questions.

A day or two ago, I think only the night before last, I was broadcasting, and I said something about the temper of a people, of an individual.<sup>3</sup> I think, if I may say so, there is a great deal of importance in the temper of approach to a problem, whether it is by a nation or by an individual or a group, and

3. See *ante*, pp. 14-17.



what seems to me wrong today, at least one of the principal things that is wrong and leading us to greater and greater difficulty, it is this present-day temper all over the world, which is, I regret to say, encouraged both by politicians and by the press in many countries. It is a deliberate temper not, well, to win over people but to add to hostilities. Well, obviously that is not a way to solve a problem; it is the way of solution by force. I do not rule out force; one cannot rule out force and I am no pacifist for a variety of reasons, chiefly practical, though I want peace and, as Prime Minister, I help in maintaining an army, an air force, a navy in India as efficiently as we can make them. They are designed for defence. So it is not from that point of view of pacifism that I am talking, but rather from a point of view of trying to understand and grip the present-day problems and go slowly, if you like, but certainly go towards some kind of a solution of them. Of one thing I am utterly convinced: there is no solution by mere war. Now, being convinced of that, one should try to find some way other than that, because that is no way. If I am compelled in self defence, I use my armies, of course, and I use every method that I can. That is a different matter because to submit or surrender to what is definitely evil is always bad.

Now, if I may remind you in this connection of what people forget, because people's memories are short. I may remind you of the basic things that Mr Gandhi stood for. Mr Gandhi stood for a million things, he was a man of infinite variety and he initiated and took part in innumerable activities and you can see many facets of his life and call them the most important—that depends upon you. It seems to me that the basic thing he stood for was that you must not submit to evil, you must resist it. Certainly resist it despite any consequences; at the same time you must resist it in a particular way. You must try to win over your opponent, fight him also in a particular way, but always win him over. Now, it is difficult to combine these two processes, because once you are in a mood to combat, to fight, then that mood leads to greater hostility of mind, and an attempt to run down and abuse your opponent as much as possible, and that results in, well, in your going farther and farther away from the solution of a problem except by utter and absolute compulsion on the other party. Well, that may be a possible solution, although the past two generations have shown that that is no solution except in a very small way, when a very big party is dealing with a very small party. Even then it is doubtful if it solves any problem but apparently it does for the moment. But when the parties are more or less evenly matched, then it is no solution. It is only very large-scale destruction and ruin for all concerned.

Now, what surprises me is not that in the context of today people should prepare in a military sense. Every person who is concerned with the safety of his country has to do that; one cannot take risks. But what surprises me is the manner of one country's approach to another in these days, the manner in

which statesmen of high degree talk to each other. It is said that we have come to the days of open diplomacy. Well, we know a great deal about the evils of secret diplomacy in the past, but one is inclined to think that anything would have been better than the open diplomacy of today which consists, often enough, in open abuse of each other. So I am led to think that apart from our objectives, and we all talk of noble objectives of peace, it is at least as important for all of us in our individual lives, as in the larger national or international life, to pay attention to the manner of doing things as much as to the things we aim at. To put it in a different way, I come back to Mr Gandhi again: that means are always as important as ends. That was the basic lesson of his life, I think, that means are as important as ends. Your ends may be noble and good, but, if you adopt wrong means, you do not reach that end simply. You have taken another path which does not lead to it although you may be talking about it.

I see today people shouting about peace and I have no doubt that the vast majority of mankind wants peace for eminently, if you like, selfish reasons, leave out any idealistic reasons. People talk about peace and yet, in talking about peace, not only is their manner most warlike but their methods are even more warlike and peace becomes a prostituted word. It has no meaning left when you use it really for purposes of war. Now, how can you get peace if you are aiming at war all the time, thinking of war, talking of war, and exploiting the word "peace" for that purpose? We have peace conferences where the most violent discourses are made in terms of war. I just do not understand how you can reach peace if you travel that way.

So it comes to this that, while you scientists are rightly concerned with the concept of the physical world and all kinds of basic things, which are highly important and which ultimately affect human thinking and human philosophy, nevertheless, it becomes important that we should understand a little more the human being, the mind of the human being, of the individual and the mass, and try in some slight degree to control the mind of the politicians and the statesmen, because it may happen that all our work and all we aim at may suffer irretrievable damage because of things going wrong. I do not know if the development of social sciences and the like are going to help. No doubt they ought to help. But I find, if I may say so, it is quite conceivable and I myself know such examples of eminent botanists, knowing all about flowers, except having an appreciation of them. So scientists and social scientists know all about human beings and all their statistics, everything, of what they do or what they do not do, which are very interesting subjects for study, and are not personally moved by the human aspect of the problem, though they have to try to solve it. I do not know if scientists are in a position really to help at the present moment in dealing with these social sciences and directing them in a particular way.



I have a faint recollection of my early boyhood, about the prevailing temper of, let us say, even up to the early part of the twentieth century, before the First World War came, temper—not in India, I mean; but temper of the Western countries—of progress, of a belief in progress, step by step going to higher stages not only of physical betterment, but mental and spiritual betterment. And, as education spread, people got to know more and more and what was the right thing to do. Well, it is obvious that that idea of progress which filled people's minds right through the nineteenth century and the early days of the twentieth does not fill their minds today. There is grave doubt. People do not know exactly what is going to happen. We consider education to be the basic thing for progress, yet we find that highly educated people somehow miss something. They are educated, but they have missed something that might be called, well, the concept of a good life, the concept of an integrated, poised life. And so they are very clever and they can do very many extraordinary things, but they just do not know how to live their life in a poised and integrated way. And that applies to an individual as to a group and to a nation. Now, how are we to get that poise, to find that poise and an integration in life, in a nation, and as between nations? Because if we don't, we do remain where we are; we collapse. And the choice becomes one of really recovering some balance in international and national relations, some real balance, or cracking up completely, because the tempo of change is so great. In that change, science of course plays a great part. It has played a great part, not perhaps because of the actual initiative of scientists but because of the application of science; scientists produce a way of doing things and others put those things to use in different ways.

I should like you, gentlemen, to think of these problems which are not new problems before the world. There have been problems ever since philosophers started philosophising. The old scientist was also as much a philosopher and it will be desirable that scientists now also should think of their science in terms of human philosophy. Now, I want to warn you that when I say philosophy I do not mean metaphysics, which is a dangerous subject and what region you reach if you enter it I do not know but you certainly move away from the region of science. But a measure of philosophy, a measure of a human approach to human problems, is not only desirable but essential today for the scientist as for all others. Well, what all others do has some importance in the mass, what the scientist does has importance individually and in the small group too because they do count in the modern world and they actually can make a difference. They can give a turn or a twist to happenings.

I do not know whether what I have said has any great relevance to this meeting, but I wished to put before you what I had in my mind, quite frankly. The subject comes to me again and again in various shapes and forms. In the normal course, we utter pious platitudes—we politicians—in our public addresses



and elsewhere, and we get headlines in the press. But that is all, that has very little meaning. The real problems remain and are neither solved by slogans nor by platitudes and those real problems demand, if not instant solution, at least instant attention in the right way. And, therefore, I have ventured to place some of these ideas before you. Thank you.

#### 4. Need for the Temper of Science<sup>1</sup>

Ladies and gentlemen,

I consider the development of research laboratories very important, not only from the practical point of view of keeping pace with developments in the world, but also from another point of view, which may perhaps not be so obvious even to the average scientist. It is what I would call the development of the temper of science in all our departments of life.

Science occupies a dominant position in the world today. Nevertheless, it is extraordinary how the temper of science is absent from most of the things we do. It is my firm conviction that the scientific temper can be developed provided a dispassionate search for the truth is made. Unless we develop this temper of science, the world will further go astray, as it is going today. Whether we can catch up with that, I do not know. But the only way to do so is to approach the problem in the particular way which I have described as the temper of science. I hope that today's function will draw further attention to this basic question.

You should not let yourselves be buried under the burden of past traditions and customs. Old traditions and ways of work had their place in the past. But today in the changing world they cannot be of much use. Of course, what was good in the ancient principles has certainly to be retained. But in many ways the people seem to have fallen in the ruts of traditions and customs in which there is hardly any life left. With bows and arrows no country can face modern weapons, although it is true that these very bows and arrows were formidable weapons once. So if a country sticks to things old and outdated, it is bound to remain behind and suffer.

Housing is our most important and urgent problem and the Building Research Institute will have done a national service of enormous importance, if it devises means of building durable and cheap houses in the country for the low-income group of people.

1. Speech at the foundation-laying ceremony of the Central Building Research Institute, Roorkee, 10 February 1951. From *The Hindustan Times*, 11 February 1951.

The people should not depend on the Government alone for all their needs to be fulfilled. Whether it is building houses, or anything else in this country, there is a habit, maybe derived from old times, of looking to governmental authority to do it. The capacity of self-help and self-reliance in the people is becoming less and less. In the olden days, whenever the Viceroy or any other high dignitary visited a place, the practice was to present petitions and memoranda to him containing the grievances of the people. The people solely depended on the Viceroy, whom they sometimes called their *mai bap*, for solving their difficulties. But the times have changed, and you no longer have any *mai bap*. You have become orphans now and have to rely mostly on your own initiative. Of course, to some extent Government help is necessary. But without the whole-hearted cooperation of the people with the Government, nothing much can be achieved.

There is a need for doing creative work in every field and mere attainment of academic degrees is not of much use. Unless the people who qualify from the universities apply that knowledge in doing creative work, the country would have no use for them. There is a tendency among some people to consider as a special virtue, not using their hands. They consider it menial work and something which is degrading. A widespread idea is that a clerk sitting at a table and getting a paltry salary, less than that of a factory worker at times, is more respectable than others. In fact, manual work is looked down upon as menial work. This is an extremely foolish idea. We must get rid of this idea and realize that dignity comes from dignity of labour of not the mind alone but creative effort.

Creative effort means making something out of nothing. Whether you make a house or a road or a factory, you are making something. If you do that thoroughly, you will have added to your status and to the wealth of the nation and the whole world.

Often students come to me with grievances that they lack a proper hostel or a club or a reading room. They want more grants from the provincial Governments and expect somebody to come and do that work for them. Of course, it is the function of the Government to do so. But the resources of the Government are limited. The point is that while the resources of the Government are limited, the resources of young men are not. I think it should be a part of the students' curricula in the university to build hostels, to build houses, or whatever they want in their spare time. They should build them with their own hands.

During my visit to the U.S.A., I saw in a college a hostel built by the students. They did so as the college was short of funds. Why don't you do the same in your spare time? The college authorities will, of course, supply you with the necessary material.



Next time I come to Roorkee, I hope to see some buildings set up in the university by the students themselves. I assure you, once you begin to support yourselves in these ways, you will grow in your own estimation.

People should keep their minds open to new, changing influences in the world and be ready to accept new ideas. India has to learn all that the other countries like the U.S.A., Britain, Russia and China have achieved.

The real meaning of swaraj is not just a change-over of Government, important though it is. The people must feel the effects of the change-over for their good in their daily lives. There are some sections of the people who criticise the Government. But I want those critics to come forward with their constructive suggestions to improve things. Mere criticism will not help.



1

# NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

V. Health



## 1. Prevention of Disease<sup>1</sup>

Modern approaches in medicine are more and more in the direction of prevention of diseases. While the curative aspect of the surgeon or physician's work is essential, it is ever more important for the State and for the medical profession to pay attention to the preventive part.

Before you talk of curing or preventing disease you have to provide to a man the normal necessities of life—food, clothing and some kind of proper housing. Unless this is done, you lay the foundations of disease. You may cure the disease, but you can never keep pace with it. Therefore, I feel that the State and public and private organisations should always lay far greater stress on the preventive aspect rather than on the curative aspect.

In the modern world not only have we to put up with conditions that produce disease, but we go about doing things which actually maim, kill and destroy people, such as war, and then send a horde of doctors to try to heal those whom we have deliberately destroyed. This could only be explained by the logic of approaching lunacy. We are living in a mad world however much we may say to the contrary. Progressively we are doing things madder than at any time in the history of the world. We should not, therefore, be proud. We may advance in one art or other, but for every step we take towards progress, we are taking half a dozen steps backward.

On the one hand, bigger and bigger means of destruction are being developed. On the other hand, there are many human agencies like the Red Cross and all kinds of other agencies to render relief. It does not seem to strike us that the best thing is not to create conditions where relief is necessary.

The President's<sup>2</sup> address has referred to books written by ancient Indian medical men like Susruta,<sup>3</sup> Nagarjuna<sup>4</sup> or Charaka.<sup>5</sup> They had even been translated into Arabic in Baghdad in the 8th century A.D. Ancient Indian medicine and surgery were very advanced in those days, but it is also a fact that afterwards they had become completely stagnant. One of the reasons advanced by the President of the Conference for this is the intervention of the priests and priestly minds. I would say the latter is more dangerous than the priest himself. A lay man having a priestly intelligence is the most dangerous individual. When this

1. Speech while inaugurating the twelfth annual meeting of the Association of Surgeons of India, New Delhi, 30 December 1950. From the *National Herald*, 31 December 1950.
2. N.S. Narasimhan, a leading surgeon of Madras, presided over the meeting.
3. (c. 700 BC); author of *Susrutasamhita*, a medical treatise.
4. (c. 150–250 AD); founder of the Madhyamika or the Middle Path school of Buddhism; wrote treatises on medicine, chemistry, alchemy and astronomy.
5. (c. 100 AD); author of *Charakasamhita*, a medical treatise.



approach comes in, it treats all those scientific books as revealed knowledge, which should not be questioned, and the result is that the whole system becomes stagnant and stereotyped.

This is important, not in relation to past history, but to the present day. Lay men with priestly minds are often in evidence in India. They talk about India's ancient culture and traditions and want us to adhere to them regardless of what might have happened in the last one thousand years or more. Apart from that being not an intelligent approach to things, I think, that is doing a definite injury to India's ancient culture, which was very great indeed.

The discovery of zero by the ancient Indians is one of the greatest discoveries of all time. It was a brilliant imaginative feat and it is amazing that the Indians in the beginning of the Christian era had developed arithmetic and algebra. Now, are we to be told to confine our mathematics to the early days of the decimal system or to the early part of algebra and arithmetic? It would be absurd and fantastic.

The same is true of medicine and surgery also. Achievements of ancient Indian medicine are patent to everybody as also the fact of its having become stagnant. To follow Susruta and do nothing else for the development of it is nothing but stark lunacy.

The use of terms like Indian systems and Western systems of medicine is not correct as science is universal, though it might have advanced in some countries more than in some others. The so-called Indian systems of medicine, for example, mean the Ayurvedic and the Unani. The word Unani is an old word for ancient Greece and the Unani system of medicine is really the medieval system of medicine.

So far as ancient Indian medicine and surgery are concerned, progress in them stopped a long time back and they have become stagnant. It is true there were wonder remedies as such and it is no good sniffing at them or to try to ignore the facts. There are many things to be learnt from the long experience of a race that counted a lot. This accumulation of experience is an important thing that could be got from the Unani and Ayurvedic systems just as an old medical practitioner, without many degrees, can do a lot because of his experience of human beings.

While you have to profit by these experiences, there can only be one measure that can be applied, namely, the scientific yardstick of trial and error and experiment. Approach the Ayurvedic and Unani systems with all friendship and deference but approach it with all your critical faculties. Do not accept anything simply because Nagarjuna or anybody else had written it, but because you understand it and by experiment you find it fits into the scheme of things.

To say that Ayurvedic and Unani systems are cheap while the modern system of medicine is expensive is no argument at all. For the cheapest thing



AT THE CENTRAL DRUG RESEARCH INSTITUTE, LUCKNOW, 17 FEBRUARY 1951



WITH C.V. RAMAN, LUCKNOW, 17 FEBRUARY 1951



is death itself: kill them all and there is no expense afterwards. The only point is whether they should achieve that object or not. If there is a curative it should be used. If it is too expensive, they may not be able to use it. But it is no use putting something as an alternative, which does not serve the purpose unless one deals with neurotic and such other patients. Our approach must be a scientific approach and not that kind of conceited approach which thinks that what we are doing now is the last word on that subject.

The medical men and the surgeons must apply that test and get as much as possible from the ancient Indian experience and the modern experience and always search for true ways of solving the many riddles that accost them.

Unfortunately modern medicine tends to become expensive and eminent surgeons and physicians are far out of reach of the average person. This is a difficult problem and should not be so. It is here that the social approach to the problem and the State comes in. The community must have the assurance that if they need some kind of service they will get it and that their poverty will not come in the way. In many countries great progress has been made in regard to the social approach to the problem and I have no doubt in India too you will have to move in that direction. Otherwise, it would be very difficult. For rich people and rich surgeons to live in a world apart, where one person looks after the rich man's probably overfed body and the large number of other people do not even get proper attention, is not right and raises many problems. But I will not go into it now.

## 2. The Scientific Approach to Medicine<sup>1</sup>

Excellency,<sup>2</sup> Chief Minister, scientists and other friends,

I believe we have exceeded the time allowed for speeches; nevertheless, I want to clear up some misconceptions chiefly relating to myself. The first thing is that I am not at all opposed to drugs; I only dislike the person who takes them. I think that it is quite essential, especially from the national point of view, to promote drug research and the manufacture of important drugs and to treat epidemics to improve the general public health, even occasionally to allow the individuals to have them where necessary. So I have come here without any, shall I say, reluctance or any reservations in my mind to perform

1. Speech at the opening of the Central Drug Research Institute, Lucknow, 17 February 1951. A.I.R. tapes, N.M.M.L.
2. Homi Mody, Governor of Uttar Pradesh.

this opening ceremony, because I do think that drug research on a scientific basis, I am sure, is quite essential for any country, and more especially for our country. It is necessary for a variety of reasons, among them being to check quackery and superstition. We have far too much of quackery and superstition in this country, and we try to hide this quackery and superstition under rather noble-sounding words. Now, that is a dangerous thing. Whatever we should do, we should do with a clear conscience and not try to say something and do something else or be ourselves rather woolly-minded about it. My mind is absolutely clear on this subject, that anything that savours of quackery and superstition should be put down, without any mercy shown. It is a frank opinion I am giving you. If I may put it very, very crudely, I would rather die without quackery than live with quackery, because I may survive possibly by some accident by the use of quack methods but then I encourage a hundred other people to do that and they are more likely to die. Therefore, from the larger point of view, and from the point of view of public health even, saving an individual by quackery is not good enough; it is a dangerous thing.

Now, therefore, I think that the encouragement of scientific institutes of research is important to spread this scientific atmosphere and habit of mind in the people, quite apart from supplying certain essential things that are necessary in civilized life. Having said that, may I also say that I have long had a dislike for what might be called the valetudinarian view of life, and, I imagine, with all respect to those present here, that that has been evident probably more in the city of Lucknow than anywhere else in India. People consider themselves gently bred who, if they see an orange at a distance of ten yards, get influenza and call in all kinds of doctors to treat them. And then, in the old days, perhaps you will remember, there were the Begums and others whose pulse was felt through a bit of string that was taken out because they could not be touched, and plenty of money was spent, and plenty of money was rather earned by the *hakims* and *vaid*s and doctors and all that, giving them, I hope, normally harmless concoctions, sometimes bad ones, but which had nothing to do with their conditions anyhow. And so in this country, and more especially in the city of Lucknow, it seemed rather vulgar and low-down to be healthy. One had to be not so well and in fact it is well known that it is almost an insult for you to go and tell somebody how well you are looking. You have to tell him or her rather—perhaps more her—how weak you are, how thin you have grown, how pale you are. The fellow might be like a pumpkin, but you have to go on telling him how thin you are, how you have lost weight, how pale you are, and I hope you will look after yourself carefully and not overdo anything. This is a kind of polite conversation that normally used to go on in Lucknow. I do not know what happens now. And to some extent that type of conversation used to take place in other parts of India too. Such an outlook is a bad thing. Now, I happen to be, I think, fairly healthy, and I am rather proud



of my health, and dislike any person coming to me and saying that I am not healthy, not looking well, that I am leading a miserable life, and commiserating with me on my health. I can inform you, I do not feel miserable, I am healthy and good, and I feel healthy. I might also tell you—it is rather a delicate thing to say—that I dislike disease and diseased people. I have to force myself to consort with them. Many people are ill, not because of any fault of their own, but because of social conditions, addictions, and this and that. That is a different matter. We have to treat them. But the person who wants to be ill, so far as I am concerned, he can exterminate himself. I do not want to cure him. This mentality of wanting to be ill, wanting to be delicate, wanting to be nurtured and commiserated with—I have no sympathy with such people and I dislike this. And it is for these reasons that I dislike drugs. Those are the real drug-takers that count.

Long ago, many many years ago, I read a book, which evoked a strong response in me in its favour. As far as I remember, it was a book by Samuel Butler<sup>3</sup> and it was called *Erewhon*. Now, that book was about a new country, a strange country, which some travellers had managed to reach—a country which was quite cut off from the rest of the world. Many interesting things they found there. It is a very good book, and, if you get it, I would advise you to read it although it is rather old now. Many habits and conventions of these people were strange and, perhaps, according to you, rather perverse in regard to disease and in regard to crime. In regard to crime they felt that this poor man who has or may have stolen, or committed some other crime, had no opportunity to learn better. He has got a diseased mind and he ought to be treated to cure him of it. They did not punish him, but they treated him. But any person, who had a disease, they punished him, they did not treat him, they sent him to prison for it. Now that was a satire, no doubt. But that shows a great deal of truth. Those visitors found that in that country health conditions were tremendously good. In fact, they never heard of anybody being ill. If anybody was ill, he dare not say it, because he would be punished. Now that was a satire, no doubt, but it is a satire of the right kind and I like it and I wish that all malingerers who pretend to be ill, and who particularly are not ill, should be punished for saying so and feeling so and trying to impose themselves upon society as people who are ill and should be cared for and looked after.

I hope I have made my position perfectly clear to you: I am all in favour of these drug institutes, subject to those reservations in regard to individuals that I have pointed out, and I am all in favour of it partly for obvious reasons, that we are importing drugs from all other places and foreign countries—very

3. (1835–1902); British author of the Utopian satire, *Erewhon*, 1872, and its supplement, *Erewhon Revisited*, 1901.



expensive things and very necessary things in the life of today. We should not do that; we should produce them ourselves.

Secondly, I think that by our research work we can also find out new methods of doing things, new drugs possible of curing diseases, not only for ourselves but for the benefit of the world; and I have no doubt that an intensive research in many of the old household remedies or traditional remedies, research on scientific lines, would probably yield very fine results. I entirely agree with Sir Edward Mellanby<sup>4</sup> that if after research something is found to be ineffective and not good, it should be discarded absolutely and completely and not permitted to function. But you may find and you are likely to find many good things. The point is that we should approach everything with a reverent scientific approach, with eyes open, ears open, and try to experiment. That is the way one should approach everything in life and that is the only way to find truth, and not with eyes and ears closed and just trusting any kind of rumour that may reach our ears.

And finally, I like these scientific laboratories growing up, because I believe and hope that they will gradually make the Indian people more and more scientific in outlook—scientific not merely in the sense of dabbling in test tubes and laboratories and the like, but get that type of mind and that type of thinking which scientists ought to have, which they do not always have, that is, the poise, the dispassionate type of mind, which is not swept away by passion and prejudice, and which can consider problems of life reasonably, logically, and with as great a spirit of detachment as possible and thus come to conclusions.

I thank Sir Edward Mellanby, an eminent physician and researcher, for agreeing to come here. He will be here for three months to give a push to this institution and has agreed to stay on for ten or twelve more. After that we have to appoint another Director. Dr B. Mukerji,<sup>5</sup> who is at present the Director of the Drug Institute in Calcutta, has been appointed Director of the Central Drug Research Institute.

4. (1884-1955); eminent physiologist who served as Director, Central Drug Research Institute, Lucknow, for a brief period in 1951.
5. Bishnupada Mukerji (1903-1979); Director, Central Drug Research Institute, Lucknow, July 1951-63; Director, Chittaranjan National Cancer Research Centre, Calcutta, 1963-68.

## NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

## VI. Education and Culture





## 1. To U.N. Dhebar<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
October 31, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,<sup>2</sup>

Thank you for your letter of the 27th October. In the last paragraph of that letter you ask me about Hindi equivalents of English words. I entirely agree with you. I think that we are proceeding along entirely wrong lines in choosing artificial and difficult words in Hindi. I do not know which translation you refer to. But presumably it is the official translation. I confess I do not understand a great part of it.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. File No. 2(484)/49-PMS.
2. He was at this time the Chief Minister of Saurashtra.

## 2. To Rajendra Prasad<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
November 7, 1950

My dear Mr President,

Thank you for your letter of the 6th November regarding the propagation of Hindi. I hope to discuss this matter with you in the course of my next interview. I believe that the Education Ministry has given a good deal of thought to it already, more especially in regard to compiling a list of technical and like terms for standard use. I shall enquire from them and I shall also ask the Home Ministry what they are doing about the encouragement of Hindi.

In regard to Services, Hindi is a compulsory language which new recruits have to learn. We cannot insist upon a previous knowledge of Hindi from new recruits, as this would inevitably mean restricting admission to people from certain parts of India only at present. Sometime later this qualification might be laid down. Unfortunately, our standards have fallen noticeably. If we introduce any other limiting qualification of this type, the general standards of new entrants might fall still further.

You will appreciate that we are overwhelmed with very difficult problems at the present moment. The foreign situation has grown exceedingly dangerous

1. File No. 52(5)/50-PMS.

and we are particularly affected by recent developments in Tibet and Nepal. The food situation in the country is, as you know, very grave indeed. It is a little difficult therefore at the present moment to give much attention to other matters.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### 3. The Future of the Hindi Language<sup>1</sup>

Hindi can become a really great national language if it keeps its doors open and adopts suitable words from all other languages.

The strength and power of a language lies in its capacity to continue to grow and expand by absorbing newer and newer words from all sources.

A strange controversy has arisen over Hindi and Urdu. Protagonists of Hindi make out that Urdu is a foreign language. It is no such thing. It is as much a language of the soil as Hindi. These protagonists now are desperately trying to make Hindi grow artificially. They are trying to create a jargon which is unintelligible to the common man.

In the past several centuries literary works were mostly written in Sanskrit. Later they came to be written in Persian, with the result that Hindi got little opportunity to grow. In the recent past English held sway, and thinking men thought and wrote in English in very many cases. Now suddenly we find the protagonists of Hindi trying to make it a modern language. They are trying all sorts of artificial methods of coining new words unintelligible to the common man. They sometimes go to the extent of casting aside popular words, which have been in use for decades, and substituting new unintelligible ones. They might feel that the words they so chose were beautiful, and of pure Sanskrit extraction, but that will not help the growth of the language. It will become too formal and unfit to grow.

This trend is harmful to the growth of language. Words should be absorbed from all sources. I see no reason why English words should not be absorbed in Hindi.

In Uttar Pradesh, the home of Hindi, a new kind of language is being spoken by persons who call themselves educated. It is unintelligible even to

1. Speech at a meeting of the Hindi-Hindustani Pracharini Sabha, Ahmedabad, 31 January 1951. From the *National Herald*, 1 February 1951.



men of that State who visit it now after a lapse of two or three years. A language which is not intelligible to the common people is no language and will not be accepted by the people.

I am not opposed to new words being coined from Sanskrit. But this must be done in a natural manner. In fact, this process of coining new words should be a natural one and new words should be coined from all languages. Once I just thought of going through the English dictionary to find out words of Indian origin in it and I was surprised to find, in the fifty and odd pages I went through, many such words. There lies the strength of the English language. That is why I say that a language is not made by just passing a law, or forcing words as it were into its vocabulary.

#### 4. To C.D. Deshmukh<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 2, 1951

My dear Deshmukh,

...I am anxious that in our legitimate desire for economy, we should not hit our social activities too much.<sup>2</sup> As it is, these activities are poor and undeveloped as compared to most other countries. In every country in Europe there is this tussle going on, which has been aggravated by the rearmament programme. Nevertheless, almost every Government is fighting hard to keep its social services going at full strength in spite of financial stringency and rearmament. They do so partly because they feel this is right, but even more so they realise that any marked diminution of them would raise popular outburst. This is not only a political fear of Government weakening but of anti-social elements becoming stronger. In England, in France, Holland, etc., this is specially so. Only a day or two ago, Eisenhower complained that Holland refused to reduce its social activities in spite of the urgency of rearmament.<sup>3</sup> In England the same kind of refusal is taking place. In France much the same thing is happening. In all these countries the social programmes are very big involving large sums of money.

In India we are far behind in this respect and we are just making beginnings. It is true we have to restrict our activities because of lack of resources. But, as far as possible, we should pay particular attention to the growth of these social

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

2. Deshmukh suggested some economy measures in his letter of 2 February.

3. Dwight D. Eisenhower, supreme commander of NATO forces, addressed U.S. Congress on 1 February on his discussions with other member-countries of NATO on defence matters.



activities. Or else the very foundation on which we rest is weakened. In England, in spite of every difficulty, Cripps<sup>4</sup> went on subsidizing heavily a national theatre and they are now building a huge concert hall. Both these may or may not be important. But, as Cripps said to me, on no account would he allow the culture and soul of Britain to starve.

These are general remarks unrelated to any specific proposal of yours. One proposal which has been mentioned to me was in regard to the abolition or suspension of the Films Division.<sup>5</sup> I would regret this as I think that Division has made progress and done good work already. It is an expanding thing and, both from the internal and external points of view, would normally be considered very necessary. Our cinema industry, though very big, is exceedingly poor in quality. The Films Division was setting a good example to it and trying to pull it up. Apart from all this, it is a money-making concern and its income is likely to grow, just as broadcasting brings in revenue which is monthly growing....

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. Stafford Cripps was Chancellor of the Exchequer, November 1947-October 1950.
5. The Films Division was set up in 1948 under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to produce documentaries and newsreels.

## 5. A Flexible Approach in Education<sup>1</sup>

Shrimati Asha Devi<sup>2</sup> has asked me for a message for the seventh All-India Basic Education Conference.<sup>3</sup> The Conference will, of course, have my good wishes, but she asks for something more than that. I would hesitate to say much on a subject in which I am not an expert. But obviously each one of us is intensely interested in education and in basic education especially.

The general principle of basic education was accepted long ago by the Congress and a number of provincial Governments tried to apply it in various ways. These provincial Governments were criticised for deviating from the original idea. I am unable to say how far these deviations have been justified. But, on general principles, it seems to me that in any such experiment it is

1. Message for the All-India Basic Education Conference, New Delhi, 19 February 1951. File No. 40(96)/49-PMS.
2. Asha Devi Aryanayakam.
3. The Conference was held at Sewagram from 3 to 5 March 1951.

desirable to have a variety. There is always the danger of too much orthodoxy killing the spirit underlying a certain policy and of preventing the development of an inquisitive and experimental mind. We can either think in terms of an experiment strictly controlled by certain precise rules. That is good, as then we can see what result it yields. On the other hand, such an experiment necessarily is likely to be limited, like a pilot plant. If it succeeds, well and good, and it can be extended. The educational process takes some time to achieve results, and if we confine ourselves to one experiment only, then we cannot take full advantage of a number of approaches. Therefore, it seems to me that we should not object to the application of various approaches to the same problem.

Then again Governments have to deal with a variety of circumstances. They do not consist of a small body of persons devoted to a certain cause. They have to adapt themselves to these circumstances and they may not be judged from the point of view, let us say, of an *ashram*.

Education necessarily implies an objective to be aimed at. That objective will be a personal and an individual one, as well as a social one. The social objective means some kind of a picture of society, which we wish to develop. In the present circumstances of India, or the world, few persons can lay down precisely this social objective, although the broad lines of it might be indicated. For many months, our Planning Commission has been grappling with problems allied to social objectives. It has not been an easy matter and it will take them some months more even to produce a limited plan. It is easy to lay down certain objectives in an academic way. It is much more difficult to translate them into practice, having regard to the various forces at play and the material available.

For all these reasons, it seems to me that the approach to education should not be too rigid, and should allow free play for experiment and the development of the individual and of the society we aim at.

## 6. To A.K. Azad<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 28, 1951

My dear Maulana,  
I hope you are recovering from your indisposition.

I have heard, rather vaguely, that some conferences on literary and like subjects are being convened by the Education Ministry in the middle of March. On learning of this I enquired from the Education Ministry by telephone today,

1. J.N. Collection.



and was given some particulars. Apparently, there is a conference on "Letters" and a conference on "Art and Music", etc.

There can be little doubt that we should encourage all cultural activities, but I think there is room for doubt how far we encourage these activities by having these official conferences and bringing together here a selected number of persons from various States. Personally I think that the Government should not directly concern itself with these matters. Culture officialised is no culture at all or is likely to lose all its flavour. The normal practice is for Government to encourage worthwhile private and non-official institutions or in the alternative for Government to subsidize some institution like in the U.K., the British Council.<sup>2</sup> I do not myself see what good can result by odd people coming here for a conference and delivering speeches about culture, whatever that might mean.

Any such conference, presumably, is a first step and has to be followed in other ways. This means that we are officialising this whole business more and more and taking on financial and other commitments, which we should avoid.

I believe that last year some kind of a cultural conference was held, but it has not led to much result except perhaps some scholarships. The whole question, of course, has many aspects and has to be carefully thought out as to what we can do with our limited resources. To spend these limited resources on conferences and on travelling allowance bills, perhaps, is not the best way to utilise them. However, if a conference has been fixed and announced, there is nothing more to be said about it.<sup>3</sup> But, I do hope that this conference will not lead to the formation of any organization on Government's behalf and for which Government is financially responsible. At the present moment of grave financial stringency, this would be peculiarly unsuitable.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

2. It was established by the British Government in 1934 for the promotion of the English language abroad and for the development of closer cultural relations between Britain and other countries.
3. An all-India conference sponsored by the Ministry of Education and held in Delhi on 17 March decided to set up an academy to foster dance, drama and music and recommended that an Asian music festival be held in Indīa. It also discussed the development of a national theatre and the adoption of a uniform system of notation for Indian music.



**NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION****VII. Physical Fitness**



## 1. Physical Fitness<sup>1</sup>

There are so many things that we dream of doing and plan to do, but somehow dreams remain dreams and plans remain plans. So it is a satisfying thing to see accomplished something which we intended doing.<sup>2</sup>

After all, our country and our people have to go a good distance before we could be called a healthy and physically fit people. We are not so today for a variety of reasons beyond our control, and fundamentally because we lack the basic necessities of life. The Stadium will give us certain opportunities that every child and young man and woman should get.

I hope that in this way we shall gradually spread out this cult of physical fitness to every town and village in India and not make it just the professional pride of a few.

1. Inaugural speech at the opening of the National Stadium, New Delhi, 25 January 1951. From *The Statesman*, 27 January 1951.
2. Nehru had laid the foundation stone of the Stadium on 19 January 1950. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 14 Part I, pp. 359–360.

## 2. Asian Games<sup>1</sup>

Delhi and India are fortunate in having the first Asian Games here next month.<sup>2</sup> I understand that a large number of countries of Asia are sending their noted athletes for this purpose to Delhi. They will be welcome here both for their own sakes and for the sake of the countries they represent.

Athletic contests are good from the point of view of developing, in friendly rivalry, the youth of the nation. For us, this is specially important as we have largely neglected this aspect of national and social activity. We have to aim at the physical fitness of the entire nation and more especially of the youth of the nation. This fitness can only be achieved if we aim high and by organising contests. This high aim has always to be kept in view.

1. Message for the first Asian Games, New Delhi, 18 February 1951. *The National Herald*, 22 February 1951.
2. The Asian Games were held between 4 and 11 March 1951. There were six events and eleven countries participated.



There is another aspect, an important one, to these international gatherings of athletes. They bring together the youth of many countries and thus help, to some extent, in promoting international friendship and cooperation. In these days, when dark clouds of conflict hover over us, we must seize every opportunity to promote this understanding and cooperation between nations.

I welcome therefore these Asian Games and send greetings to all the athletes, both from India and from the other countries of Asia, who have come here to take part in these friendly contests. It must be remembered always that these games and contests are to be carried out in an atmosphere of the utmost friendliness. Each one must try his utmost, but each one, whether winner or loser, must play his part gracefully and must enter into the spirit of the game.

## THE CONGRESS ORGANISATION





## 1. To Purushottamdas Tandon<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
November 4, 1950

My dear Purushottamdas,

Thank you for your letter of the 3rd November.<sup>2</sup> I do not think it will serve any useful purpose for us to argue about matters in which we differ. It is perfectly true that it is our business always to understand and accommodate each other; at the same time each one of us has to be true to himself and should try to do his duty to the best of his lights.

But there is one matter I should like to make clear. You refer twice in your letter that I was opposed to the inclusion in the Working Committee of a colleague from Orissa, meaning presumably Biswanath Das.<sup>3</sup> I am sorry if I conveyed that impression to you, because I had and have no objection to him in that sense. On the first day that we were discussing these matters, names were not discussed much. Stress was laid on the kind of persons who should be included in the Working Committee and it was stated by me, and I think one or two others, that as far as possible they should not be keen party men. You said that you were thinking of taking in Presidents of Provincial Congress Committees. Then you mentioned two or three names, among which was Biswanath Das. I expressed an opinion that his inclusion might not be worthwhile. I was thinking in comparative terms and I had more particularly another Orissa man, Mahtab, in my mind. That did not mean that I had any objection to Biswanath Das as such. I was somewhat critical also of another name that you mentioned, but the matter was not discussed then.

On the second occasion when we all met, I refrained from expressing any opinion about the personnel of the Working Committee. I felt that our approaches were somewhat different and this discussion of personalities was not very desirable. As you had said, it was your responsibility to choose the members of the

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Tandon, as Congress President, regretted that Nehru (*vide* his letter of 16 October 1950 published in *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 151-155), should think that he was responsible for the present state of the Congress organisation. He attributed the malpractices in the organisational elections to the indifference of Nehru and the previous Working Committee. Tandon also could not recollect if Nehru had ever indicated to him the kind of Working Committee that should be formed as contended by Nehru.

3. Tandon wrote that following Nehru's objection to the nomination of a certain person from Orissa, the names of some other persons were agreed upon. Thereupon Nehru had commented that the Committee was not becoming "bright" and suggested a name which was not acceptable to Tandon.

## SELECTED WORKS OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Working Committee<sup>4</sup> and I felt that it was none of my business to interfere or try to come in the way of that responsibility.

I knew nothing about your final choice till you telephoned to me one afternoon. When you told me some of the names on the telephone, I said to you that I felt rather out of place there, a square peg in a round hole.

I am sorry if I left any wrong impression in your mind. I thought that not only by my talk then but for other reasons also, I had made it perfectly clear how my mind worked. I am merely writing to you now to clear up any misunderstanding and with no other purpose. More especially because of Biswanath Das.

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. Tandon contended on 3 November that in an earlier letter he had written of his "responsibility" in the matter of formation of the Working Committee, and not of his

## JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

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I have also received your letter of the 3rd December. The Congress Working Committee have given a good deal of thought to the formation of this "Congress Democratic Front." The question before us is not one of interpretation of the Constitution, but wider issues were raised for earnest consideration. (You refer to what Shri Kala Venkataswami said in the Constituent Assembly on 4th November 1946.)

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answer to a question at a railway station. So far as the constitutional aspect is concerned we are not aware of any specific act of the Congress Democratic Front which may be said to bring it within the disciplinary jurisdiction of the Congress.]<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless it is our considered opinion that the formation of such a group, even within the Congress, can only have a disruptive influence on the Congress organisation and lead progressively to the weakening of that organisation. Such a group can either be a non-functioning group or, as presumably it is intended, it can be an active and working group. In the latter event, it is inevitable that points of difference and conflict arise between it and the main body of the Congress. If this process continues, the result is bound to be a parting of the ways.

The Working Committee therefore had to consider this question from the point of view of all these wider consequences and I have been asked by them to convey to the leaders of the Congress Democratic Front their considered views on the situation, as it exists at present.<sup>5</sup> The new group consists of some respected members of the Congress and old colleagues. Anything that they might say must necessarily command attention. But even more than this, it is the duty of all Congressmen to take a full stock of the present position and decide on a clear course of action. The domestic situation in the country is full of difficulty. The international situation is still graver and the world seems to hang on the brink of terrible war. This is a moment when all of us have to think impersonally of these larger issues which affect our people and our country and we cannot lose ourselves in petty conflicts. The Congress has a proud record of service in the past. If it cannot serve the country adequately in the future, then the reason for its continued existence goes. We are convinced that in the circumstances of today and the foreseeable future, it is essential for the Congress to continue to serve the country. If it is to continue, then it is obvious that it should continue, insofar as possible, as a strong, united and effective body, holding on to certain ideals and objectives and working for them. If that is so, then it becomes the duty of every Congressman to strengthen the Congress and to avoid doing anything which may weaken or disrupt it. Whatever faults may have crept into the organisation have to be remedied in a way so that the Congress may become a purer and more efficient organisation for the work it has to do. To try to remedy these faults by methods which weaken the Congress is surely not a proper method for a Congressman to adopt. For this reason, any step which disrupts the organisation of which all of us have had the privilege to be members, must be deprecated. I should like the leaders of the Congress

4. These lines were omitted by Tandon from his letter to Kripalani.

5. The Working Committee decided on 5 December that the Congress President should point out to Kripalani "that the method adopted by him was not proper and was likely to lead to dissensions in the Congress" and urge him to dissolve the Front.



Democratic Front to consider whether the action they have taken in forming their group can have any other result except, ultimately, to disrupt the Congress. Those who want the Congress to continue as a living organisation must necessarily oppose such efforts and this will breed conflict which cannot do any good to the organisation or to the country.

We are fully aware of the weaknesses and failings of the Congress as it is today. These weaknesses and failings can only be got over by a united effort and hard work on the part of Congressmen. The way of disruption is merely to increase those weaknesses. In the crises that we face today, both national and international, it is of the utmost importance that we should all pull together and not present a disunited front to the perils that face us.

The Working Committee hope, therefore, that the leaders of the Congress Democratic Front will give full consideration to these matters in all their far-reaching aspects and appreciate that any action of theirs which has a tendency to disrupt the Congress cannot possibly lead them to realise the objectives they have set before them. These objectives indeed are, or ought to be, common to all Congressmen. The Committee, or some members of it, would like to meet some of the leaders of your group to discuss the situation as it has arisen, so that we might jointly find ways and means to attempt to solve the problems before us, and to strengthen the Congress rather than to weaken it.<sup>6</sup>

6. Kripalani replied to Tandon on 10 December that widespread malpractices during the last Congress organisational elections and Tandon's partisan attitude in the selection of the members of the Working Committee were the crucial factors that led to the formation of the Front. He offered the Front's cooperation if a thorough and impartial inquiry was conducted into the charges of irregularities in the elections. On 3 May 1951, in response to the unity call given by Nehru and Azad, the Front was dissolved.

### 3. The Basic Ideals of the Congress<sup>1</sup>

Members seem to have lost themselves completely in superficialities.<sup>2</sup> By so doing they are doing no credit to the Congress organisation. In fact, they seem to ignore the basic ideals for which the Congress has always stood. The question of membership was never a basic pillar on which the Congress rested. The

1. Speech at the A.I.C.C. session, Ahmedabad, 29 January 1951. From the *National Herald*, *The Hindustan Times* and the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 30 January 1951.
2. There were suggestions ranging from reduction of membership fee to one anna to the active members being teetotallers, cultivation of some land by them, and removal of the condition about their being primary members for two consecutive years.

Congress all along represented certain ideals and even today it is the bounden duty of every Congressman to stand by and work for those ideals.

It is by your practical work, your determination and your courage that you can take the Congress forward and along with it the country. You cannot do so by wasting time debating whether the membership should be one anna, two annas or four annas. This shopkeepers' mentality, I have never understood. It is unbecoming of Congressmen to talk like this. Do not degrade the high ideals of the Congress by indulging in this petty talk.

The narrow approach to Congress ideals made by certain speakers suggests that Congressmen seem to have forgotten what the Congress stands for. The Congress is not an exclusive preserve of any people. It is not a static organisation. It is not a house where Congressmen or their close friends alone can sit and gather. I will tell you what the Congress is. The Congress is a weapon, it is a sword with a sharp blade with which we have fought and cut asunder all that bound us. It is very much a live thing, not something static. Congressmen today have to remember that it is with this Congress, this sword, that we have to fight other battles and take the country forward. So let not the blade of the sword be blunted.

Congressmen have forgotten some of the ordinary Congress principles. They have forgotten that the Congress stands for the service of the people. That is the mission of the Congress, its destiny and duty. How it fulfils it, is the basic question. If it fails to do so, it dies. It is our duty, therefore, to see that the Congress grows, its respect among the people increases and it achieves the stature necessary for solving the problems before us.

You should not belittle the Congress principles by bringing up petty matters like the membership fee. Mr Algurai Shastri has made certain remarks in support of his amendment seeking reduction of the membership fee to four annas.<sup>3</sup> The Congress is sought to be reduced to mere symbols like the flag, the Gandhi cap, and the membership fee.

I know the place of the Gandhi cap, which most of us have been wearing for the last thirty years, have respect for it, but do not make a fetish of it. What is more important is not the cap, but what is beneath it. I want not the cap, but brains. Let Mr Algurai Shastri retain the cap; he is welcome to do it. But I want brains; I want khadi cap-wearers to think.

Mr Shastri has also suggested that now there is no need to say that the active members of the Congress will have nothing to do with communalism.

Mr Algurai Shastri, giving the analogy of a tadpole, has said that the tadpole in course of time loses its tail and becomes a frog. He wants to convince

3. Algurai Shastri remarked that the man in the street had come to identify four-anna membership with the Congress. If this were changed, he felt, the Congress would "cut off one of its limbs."



members thereby that the question of communalism is like the tadpole's tail, which has fallen off now and has no longer any importance. The Congress, therefore, according to Mr Shastri, should dispense with this talk of Congressmen being not communal. Now there is no need to say that the active members of the Congress would have nothing to do with communalism.

Here we know what is more important, the cap or what is beneath it. I was completely amazed by this suggestion of Mr Shastri. As far as I am concerned, I consider communal unity as the very plank on which the Congress stands. All my life I have cherished this principle of the Congress and if any Congressman dare say that it can be dispensed with, I will face him and fight it out. I declare here and now that if, even by a single hairbreadth, it is sought at any time to deviate from this principle of communal unity, it becomes my duty and yours to fight this tendency.

The Congress is not an institution which we want for its own sake. The Congress is a means of serving the people. The day it becomes an institution in itself, I will be the first person to say that the Congress should be wound up. In that case, the Congress should be wound up gracefully and not allowed to be degraded.

The country faces big problems which can only be solved when the right approach is made not only to them, but to the Congress organisation through which we are going to solve them. I am in favour of the membership being one rupee. Congressmen should search their hearts and find out whether the people who support the Congress cannot pay this sum. People as a rule spend money on so many things, many of them wasteful. I will not say that in this poor country everybody is in a position to pay one rupee as subscription. If there is a little inconvenience, let it be there. It is all to the good. It will make a Congress supporter feel his responsibility towards his organisation. Ultimately, more members do not matter. It is the measure of the zeal and enthusiasm of the members, their courage and selflessness which make an organisation weak or strong. If members look at the subscriptions of any trade union they will know that a worker pays much more than one rupee. He does so to keep and maintain his organisation which fights for his rights. There is no magic in this four-anna membership. Even if there was one, we dispensed with it two years ago. Some now feel the necessity of its being reintroduced. But let every Congressman remember that it is not through membership fees that organisations grow and live. It is through selfless hard work, through a united organisation.

Congress members who seem to have lost track of its basic principles will have an opportunity of relearning them tomorrow when a resolution is discussed.<sup>4</sup> I do not want to disclose which resolution I have in mind.

4. See the next item.



The Congress should not be made so cheap that its members should pay a mere four annas or two or one, as has been suggested. The Congress needs today those who have respect for the organisation, who are willing to make sacrifices for it and work zealously for building up the country. The Congress certainly will not prosper if members rest content with merely hugging its outer symbols like the flag, the Gandhi cap and the four-anna membership. By doing so they may ensure their success in the coming elections, but will not be worthy of the Congress ideals.

#### 4. The Unity Resolution<sup>1</sup>

In view of the grave situation that the country has to face, both internally and externally, the A.I.C.C. is of opinion that there should be the largest measure of unity and cooperation among all sections of the people and every effort should be made to encourage united effort in facing our major problems. In particular, it is necessary for Congressmen to put aside their differences and cooperate for the larger causes which the Congress represents. The A.I.C.C. has noted with regret that certain tendencies are at work which must inevitably weaken and partly disrupt this great national organisation. While it is natural that, on the attainment of independence, different approaches should be made to our social and economic problems, the immediate problems are such that there should and can be a cooperative approach, within the larger ambit of Congress policy. This policy has been laid down in successive Congress resolutions and more especially in the Nasik resolutions, in regard to social, economic, communal and international affairs.<sup>2</sup>

2. That general policy, insofar as it relates to social and economic matters, has to be translated into more specific terms having regard to the nation's resources and priorities and the urgent problems that confront us in the immediate present. It must, therefore, have both a long-term objective and a short-term plan designed to achieve social justice and to make the country self-reliant and dependent on its own strength and resources. It must be based on an increasing

1. Drafted on 29 January 1951 and moved at the A.I.C.C. session, Ahmedabad, 30 January 1951. A.I.C.C. Papers, N.M.M.L. The resolution was adopted the same day without any changes.
2. The resolutions approved the economic policy of the Government, condemned communalism, reaffirmed the concept of the secular State and endorsed the foreign policy of the Government, especially with reference to relations with Pakistan. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 119-120, 127-128 and 134-135.

productivity both in land and industry, leading to a progressive advance in the well-being of the masses of the country. This will necessarily involve a measure of privation and austerity to begin with and this will have to be endured, so that the basis for future progress may be laid, but the burden should be equitably distributed and must be cast, as far as possible, on those most capable of bearing it. In the circumstances of India today, it is the responsibility of the State to take the lead in the reorganisation and development of land and industry. Such a lead can only be fruitful if it is efficiently organised and receives widespread public cooperation. This calls for the utilization of the enthusiasm, free time and other resources of the people on a voluntary basis and a nationwide scale.

3. The immediate tasks are to help in solving the food problem, in securing a large increase in production by cottage and small-scale industries and in combating social evils, such as blackmarketing and various forms of corruption, both in the administration and in the public, which have grown up and which degrade public morals and come in the way of progress. For Congressmen there is the urgent additional task of purifying the Congress organisation, making it an efficient instrument for carrying out these tasks, and bringing back something of that spirit and will to work and suffer for a cause which enabled the Congress to achieve independence.

4. A social and economic programme, so conceived, should receive the approval of large masses of our people, even though there might be many varieties of opinion among them, and open out opportunities for large-scale cooperative effort to realise it. The Congress itself has, during its long history, sheltered varieties of opinion, but has at the same time succeeded in having a large measure of harmonious working. Those varieties of opinion, provided they do not run counter to its basic principles and objectives, may still continue within its fold, but in a time of crisis, as today, nothing should be done on partisan lines which may be injurious to the larger interests of the Congress and of the country. The formation of special groups within the Congress, either on the part of a majority or a minority, is thus to be deprecated, as they tend to create hostile factions and disrupt the organisation.

5. In the great tasks ahead every effort should be made to bring all Congressmen together, so that they may have the opportunity for cooperative effort and the organisation should become as broadbased as possible. The door of the Congress should be open even to those who have left it, and Congressmen should not only engage in active cooperation among themselves but should also seek the cooperation of others.

6. The A.I.C.C. directs the Working Committee and all Provincial Congress Committees to work with this larger outlook, so as to diminish and overcome the tendencies which weaken the organisation, and to make the Congress an efficient instrument in the nation's service.



## 5. Saving the Congress<sup>1</sup>

The amendments which have been moved do not seek a radical change.<sup>2</sup> All the speakers have given general support to the resolution. But along with it they have made many suggestions<sup>3</sup> which have created a doubt whether their support is really a support or not. Whatever that might be, one thing is crystal clear that ultimately everything will depend on the way Congressmen set about to implement the resolution.

Acharya Kripalani has said that there seems to be a general desire among Congress leaders to stick to the *status quo*. I agree that the *status quo* cannot be maintained and should not be maintained.<sup>4</sup> But the question arises how to change the *status quo* and how speedily to change it. Merely by passing laws we cannot do so. It is a big question. In fact, nobody can seriously raise this question of maintaining the *status quo*, not only in India, but in Asia and the world. Countries in Asia are in a ferment, full of revolutionary trends. In India too, there are such revolutionary trends, although not visible outwardly. But an undercurrent of feeling is gathering momentum among the people that things must change, the *status quo* must change. It is now for all of us to see how best and how quickly this *status quo* can be changed.

The amendment moved by Mr Krishna Chandra Sharma<sup>5</sup> that every able-bodied person should work and the principle "those who do not work, neither shall they eat" should be accepted. I like this principle but here also the difficulty arises of translating it in practice. It is a fact that we in India do not work as hard as we should. I would like to suggest that some sort of labour conscription should be introduced in the country. Such a conscription will do immense good. Many public works have been completed in other countries through resort to labour conscription which otherwise would not have been completed. Many people seem to look down upon manual labour. Their conception of work is the office chair and they suffer from a babu mentality. This approach is

1. Reply to the debate on the Unity Resolution, A.I.C.C. session, Ahmedabad, 30 January 1951. From the *National Herald* and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 31 January 1951.
2. All the amendments were withdrawn and the resolution was passed.
3. While Kripalani suggested that there should be an economic, political and social plan for achieving unity, Sampurnanand called for introducing a new ideology for which the common man could fight and die. Algurai Shastri wanted an all-party conference to suggest ways and means to achieve the aims of the resolution. Hifzur Rahman wished the Working Committee to set its own house in order and Brahm Prakash doubted whether the provisions in the resolution would make entry into the Congress easier.
4. Kripalani feared that the dominance of the "status quoists" over the Congress would create conditions similar to those during the last days of Chiang Kai-shek.
5. A leading Congressman from Meerut; member, Constituent Assembly of India (Legislative), 1946-47, and Lok Sabha, 1952-62.



wrong. There is nothing degrading in doing manual labour, as Gandhiji always maintained, and more and more people should take to learning trades involving manual work.

The Government is handicapped by non-availability of proper statistics and data about food production in the country.<sup>6</sup> We do not know what the total production is and how much food is needed. The Government is making sample surveys and soon it would be possible to collect the necessary data.

We tried to approach this problem of food on a war basis. But somehow I do not see it being approached on that basis. The necessary drive to solve the problem is absent.

Mr Abid Ali<sup>7</sup> has said that the Congress should not join hands with the communists and the communalists. But nobody said we should. The resolution does not throw an open invitation to all and sundry to join the Congress. Only those persons can come who agree to abide by the fundamental principles of the Congress. The resolution only wants to facilitate entry of "new blood" in the Congress. The communists are bent upon one thing, namely, rebellion and armed rebellion at that. The Congress can have nothing to do with them. It is indeed fantastic to say that the resolution contemplates an alliance between the Congress and the communists or the communalists.

Mr Govind Sahay has criticised that the Congress has not succeeded in working for a Welfare State. I just cannot understand how people make these statements. Under the present circumstances I firmly believe that we cannot set up a Welfare State. A Welfare State is not something that can be created overnight. We are no magicians to do the trick. Hard persistent work will have to be put in before this ideal can be realised. The most important question is that of increasing production. Only when production is increased can the other question of having equitable distribution arise.

The aim should be to create a sort of partnership in which the people can take an active share in building up the country. Only then can the young people, who are drifting away from the Congress, be attracted. The Congress in the old days had a strong appeal, a message and a programme which drew young and old people to it. Today this is lacking and we have to recreate it by putting the Congress house in order and solving the obstacles standing in our way of establishing the cooperative commonwealth that we want. It is for this reason that we have said that no wall should be created between the Congress and those who are not in the Congress.

Congressmen should realise that ultimately their hard work and initiative will make it possible for them to realise the Congress ideals.

6. Kripalani said that the primary needs of the people had not been satisfied to the extent to which it was possible and that the food situation was "horrible."

7. (1899-1973): a Congressman from Bombay; Deputy Minister for Labour, 1952-62.

## 6. To Prafulla Chandra Ghosh<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 6, 1951

My dear Prafulla Babu,

I have not met you for some considerable time and many developments have taken place since then. I should like to meet you and have a talk with you. I know that you are highly dissatisfied with the working of the Congress organisation. Nevertheless I think it was unfortunate that you resigned and it will be still more unfortunate if you function in opposition to it.<sup>2</sup> The times are too serious for us to act in a light-hearted manner or because we do not like something. If we do not like it, we must try to reform it or change it.

You must have seen the Ahmedabad resolution.<sup>3</sup> I should like you to think about this matter and make suggestions to me and to others, which might prove helpful in bringing about a measure of unity in the Congress.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.
2. About a hundred Congress workers in West Bengal led by Ghosh and S.C. Banerjee decided on 13 November 1950 to form the Krishak Praja Mazdoor Party to carry out more effectively the Congress ideal of "a classless, non-exploiting democratic society" as the Congress was "not a fit vehicle" for the realization of the ideal.
3. See *ante*, pp. 115-116.

## 7. To Purushottamdas Tandon<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 11, 1951

My dear President,

Ever since my return from Ahmedabad, I have been thinking hard as to what we should do to carry out the directions contained in the resolution passed by the A.I.C.C. You will remember the meeting of the Working Committee held after the A.I.C.C., where this matter was discussed and certain general lines of approach were laid down.<sup>2</sup> I had hoped that something on those lines would be done as soon as possible. Naturally the lead should be taken by you as Congress

1. J.N. Collection.
2. The Congress Working Committee on 31 January 1951 authorised Tandon and Nehru to look into various complaints and to facilitate implementation of the Unity Resolution.



President. I do not quite know where you are and when you are likely to be in Delhi.

From all accounts, conditions in many provinces are not at all good. In some they are deteriorating. The A.I.C.C. resolution brought some hope to people's minds, but if there is much delay in acting upto it, that hope will vanish away.

There are many other things that I would like to discuss with you. I believe I have a certain utility in the Congress organisation, but I feel progressively that I cannot make myself useful. I seem to be cut off from the working of that organisation. I have not had this particular experience previously and so, with all my desire to be helpful, I find myself a little helpless and I sometimes wonder if it is worthwhile my continuing in this fashion.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 8. To Gopichand Bhargava<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
27 February 1951

My dear Gopichandji,

You wrote to me some days ago about certain speeches delivered by Sardar Pratap Singh Kairon<sup>2</sup> attacking your Ministry. I considered those speeches improper and wrote to him about it. Whatever the merits of his accusation might have been, it was utterly wrong for him or any responsible Congressman to go about attacking the Government and the Ministry in the manner he did. I spoke to Sardar Pratap Singh also about it when he was here recently for the Working Committee meeting.<sup>3</sup>

2. But obviously this matter does not end there. I am gravely disturbed about the situation in the Punjab vis-a-vis the Congress and the Government. For a member of the Congress Working Committee and a President of the P.C.C. to attack the Government openly and bring grave charges against it, is a serious affair. It means that the Congress as a whole, or the majority of the Congress, is entirely opposed to the Government. That is, in the long run, an impossible situation. Our Governments in the States are presumed to be Congress

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Kairon, President of the Punjab Congress Committee, accused the Ministry headed by Bhargava of following wrong economic and administrative policies. In an interview to the press on 9 January, he alleged official interference in a by-election and said that the State Ministry was not cooperating with the State Congress.

3. Held on 25 and 26 February.



Governments and they cannot survive for long if even the Congress deserts them. Ultimately Governments do not depend greatly on a vote in the State Legislature. They depend on the sanction derived from the Congress organisation. It is possible for the Working Committee or for the Central Parliamentary Board to exercise some check on State Congress Committees. But this can only be short-lived if there is a widespread feeling in the State. In the Punjab the hiatus between the Government and the Congress, and presumably the people, is increasing at a rapid pace. This can only lead to chaotic political conditions and a collapse of the Congress organisation.

3. It is therefore of the utmost importance that this matter should be taken in hand and remedied. If it is necessary for the Congress Working Committee or the Central Parliamentary Board to come into this picture, they will certainly do so. But essentially it is a provincial matter and no amount of external interference can remedy it. I have little doubt that those who are opposing the Government in the Punjab are not angels and may have their own motives. But that does not help me much.

4. The position therefore is that some effort must be made by you and your Government, and more especially by you, both as Chief Minister and as the leading Congressman of the province, to check this disintegration and remove doubts and suspicions from the Congress and the public mind.

5. I know that the situation in the Punjab is exceedingly complicated. Perhaps part of this complication is of our own making, because we have relied on odd groups which have little to do with the Congress and which may well oppose it when it serves their purpose to do so. That is bad politics and, from the point of view of the coming elections, an invitation to defeat.

6. Certain instances have been reported to me which have surprised me. I am told that during the recent Congress *thana* elections in Amritsar district rural area, open terrorism took place and people went about with sten guns, etc., threatening voters. Also that many Congress *panchas* were actually abducted to prevent them from voting. One place was specially mentioned to me in this connection. This was Katranagar Police Station. It is said that two brothers, Iqbal Singh and Prakash Singh, were specially concerned with this business of terrorising people. Further I was told that Giani Kartar Singh, when he goes to Majithia, stays with these people who are notorious for their activities of a highly objectionable kind. This naturally rather demoralises the police.

7. I have also been told that one Samma Singh of Lyallpur, who is said to be a close associate of Giani Kartar Singh, abducted two girls of tender age near Tarn Taran in Amritsar district. At that time he was using Giani Kartar Singh's jeep. He has been accused of rape, but the case instituted against him is for abduction only. He is absconding.

8. I am repeating what I have heard and I cannot of course vouch for any story. But if even such allegations are made against Ministers, something must

be done to clear them up. If they are not cleared up, then the Minister<sup>4</sup> should go.

9. Sometime ago, my attention was drawn to some troubles that took place in Ludhiana round about the 26th January,<sup>5</sup> when there was a hartal and people were lathi charged and arrested. Many allegations are made of people being beaten and manhandled in prison. All this trouble was apparently due to people protesting against the grant of some valuable land to the Ludhiana Maternity Hospital.

10. Apart from this growing disorder, what troubles me most is this conflict between the Punjab Congress and the Punjab Government<sup>6</sup> and the fact that the Government relies more and more on non-Congressmen. I think the situation is serious enough for some action to be taken to remedy it in the near future. I can suggest no remedy at present and would like to know how you look upon it and what you propose to do. The matter was considered to some extent by the Working Committee at its last meeting. It will have to be more fully considered later. Before we do that, I should like to have your advice.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. The dissenting group in the State Congress alleged that Kartar Singh was pursuing a communal policy and that the Premier was yielding to his demands as the price for support from the Sikh group in the Legislative Assembly.
5. During protest meetings and hartals from 21 to 26 January in Ludhiana against the leasing by the State Government of twelve acres of land adjacent to the Ramlila grounds to the maternity hospital, the police lathi-charged the processionists and arrested some persons.
6. In the organisational elections held in June 1950, the faction opposed to Bhargava secured an overwhelming majority.

3

## COMMUNALISM





1. To B.C. Roy<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 14, 1950

My dear Bidhan,

Ansari,<sup>2</sup> the Bihar Minister, came to see me today and told me of his experiences during his recent visit to Calcutta, where he went to support the candidature of Dr Ahmed.<sup>3</sup> He tells me that he met you also and no doubt he gave you his impressions. Nevertheless I am writing to you about this matter.

You informed me some days ago of a very objectionable leaflet that had been issued during the election in Calcutta. This bore the name of a number of Muslim MLAs and others previously associated with the Muslim League. You arrested these people and I understand that there is a case proceeding against them. It was quite clear to me, when I read your telegram about this leaflet, that the persons whose names appear on it will deny their signatures. Indeed, I cannot imagine any person with the least grain of intelligence, whatever his motive and inner feelings might be, putting down his name on such a leaflet. I would not normally have attached much importance to this leaflet, at any rate in connection with these people whose names are there. But, Ansari tells me, and no doubt you have more proof of this, that these people and others have been speaking publicly and privately more or less in this strain.

If that is so, it is not merely a matter of proceeding against them in the courts. That certainly can be done. What is more important is that the feeling of a certain large section of Muslims in Calcutta is all wrong and is apparently influenced by these old Muslim Leaguers. Further that these people have been driven by circumstances to some kind of despair when they don't care very much what happens. This obviously is an explosive situation, not only locally but with wider consequences. We must try to find out some remedy for this. Or else we shall have a great deal of trouble. Some Muslims misbehaving will lead to a larger number of Hindus doing the same and then there would be reactions in Pakistan and maybe in the rest of India also. This is a serious outlook.

I have no doubt you must have given thought to this situation. I can suggest very little except perhaps one or two things.

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Abdul Qaiyum Ansari (1905-1973); Congressman of Bihar; Minister, Government of Bihar, between 1947 and 1967; President, Bihar P.C.C., 1959-63; member, Rajya Sabha, 1970-72.

3. In a by-election caused by the member, Sarif Khan's departure to Pakistan, Rafiuddin Ahmed was elected from the Howrah-Hooghly urban Muslim constituency on 30 November 1950.

It appears that the main reason for this acute discontent among the Muslims is the fact that not much has been done for rehabilitating those whose houses were destroyed and looted. I know that some free grants were made. These did not exceed Rs 200 per family. Out of this also, cuts were made for sums previously given and which no doubt had been spent on just food, etc. The result is that sometimes only a very small part of the Rs 800 was given to these persons. Obviously they could do very little or nothing with this sum.

I realise the financial difficulties of Government. Nevertheless I feel that something more should be done. This can be done either directly, that is, by Government rebuilding some of these burnt-out houses or in some other way. If some such action was taken by Government, even in a small way, that is, for a relatively small number of persons, it would have some effect. Where action is taken, it should be adequate.

The second point is that we should utilise the services of nationalist Muslims as far as possible to give relief. In the past, it appears that your Government has functioned through the old Muslim League leaders for this purpose. Thus the Muslim public continues to look to those leaders.

Thirdly, it might be a good step to appoint a few Muslim officers for this and like work. The number need not be great. But it would have a psychological effect.

I pass on these thoughts to you for your consideration. I do feel that something should be done and that should be done so as not to increase the influence of the old Muslim League people.

Yours,  
Jawahar

## 2. To Chief Ministers<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 7, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

I should like to draw your particular attention to certain reliable reports that we have received about the activities of the Hindu Mahasabha. It appears that the Hindu Mahasabha has decided upon a definite plan of creating communal trouble. They feel that there is no other way of achieving their objective, whatever that might be. They are not likely to go far by the normal democratic methods. So, rather foolishly, they think in terms of having communal riots

1. J.N. Collection.



and thus gaining two objectives. The first is to frighten and drive away Muslims and the second is to make Hindus anti-Government and anti-Congress, because Government is likely to take action against them in case of trouble.

Such riots usually take place by the story of some case of cow-slaughter. This enrages the Hindus in the neighbourhood who then attack and loot their Muslim neighbours. It is patent that, in existing circumstances, there is very little chance of any Muslims indulging in cow-slaughter in rural or other areas, when they know the strong feeling against it.

Recently, such allegations of cow-slaughter were made in Bihar and they were followed by riots and the killing and looting of Muslims.<sup>2</sup> The Bihar Government took strong action immediately.

At the last session of the Hindu Mahasabha at Poona, highly objectionable and very virulent speeches were made.<sup>3</sup> Those speeches were themselves an indication of the way the Hindu Mahasabha mind was working. Further information received by us tends to show that they intend creating much more mischief on the lines indicated above. I am therefore sending you this information, so that you might be careful about Hindu Mahasabha activities, in particular in areas where Muslims live in some numbers. Those activities should be carefully watched and action taken where necessary.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. A sadhu who had protested against alleged cow-slaughter in Dhanbad district was murdered on 30 January 1951. This led to rioting and arson on the following day.
3. N.B. Khare, presiding over the annual session of the All India Hindu Mahasabha on 24 December 1950, held the Congress responsible for India's Partition and described the agreement of 8 April 1950 with Pakistan as "a palliative." He also criticized Shaikh Abdullah's Government, demanded imposition of Central rule in Jammu and Kashmir and said that his party was not afraid of Pakistan.

### 3. To Chief Ministers<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 19, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

In a recent letter I drew your attention to the deliberate attempts being made by the Hindu Mahasabha to create communal trouble.<sup>2</sup> Information has reached us that the coming Holi festival may be specially utilised for this purpose. You

1. File No. 25(6)/50-PMS.
2. See the preceding item.

will remember that it was during this Holi festival last year that trouble took place in many parts of Uttar Pradesh and in some other States also. I would, therefore, request you to take every possible precaution on this occasion.

Usually police officials and others take part in the Holi festivities or play games and matches. As they are otherwise occupied, the hooligan elements have a chance of misbehaving. This might be borne in mind.

Apart from police arrangements, it would be desirable if Congress and other workers were encouraged to keep wide awake on this occasion and try to control the public. Civil authorities should be particularly kept up to the mark and informed that it is their special responsibility that no trouble occurs in the areas under their control. If trouble does take place, it will not redound to their credit and will be a black mark against them.

Precautions should be taken in every State, but special attention should be paid to this matter in Bengal, U.P., Bihar, Hyderabad and Rajasthan.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

#### 4. To C. Rajagopalachari<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 19, 1951

My dear Rajaji,<sup>2</sup>

I have been receiving disturbing news about possible happenings during the coming Holi festival. I am sending, therefore, a letter to various Chief Ministers,<sup>3</sup> a copy of which I enclose. Apart from the places I have mentioned in the letter, Delhi is also a danger zone. I hope that adequate precautions will be taken here as elsewhere.

A report has reached me that certain mischief-makers belonging to the Hindu Mahasabha propose to take advantage of the fact that the U.P. Police are having a hockey match near Moradabad during the Holi day. This will mean that a large number of police will gather there and will thus be immobilised, leaving the field clear.<sup>4</sup>

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

1. File No. 5/8/51-Poll., M.H.A.

2. He was the Union Home Minister at this time.

3. See the preceding item.

4. During the Holi celebrations on 23 March, some clashes occurred in Bareilly, Kanpur, Jalandhar, Kapurthala and Jabalpur.

**MATTERS OF ADMINISTRATION**

**I. Indian States**

**(i) General Policy**





## 1. To Vallabhbhai Patel<sup>1</sup>

Srinagar

October 29, 1950

My dear Vallabhbhai,

Thank you for your letter of the 26th October about the position in the States. I am grateful to you for writing to me so fully on this subject and giving me the background of what has happened<sup>2</sup> and what is happening. I had a fair idea of the difficulties confronting us in these old States and, as I said in my previous letter, I myself could not think of any alternative arrangement in the past to the one we have thus far had.

Nevertheless, I have been troubled about various developments in these States and the general policy sometimes pursued there. That policy has often far-reaching consequences and affects our other activities also. This general policy or any question involving general policy should not be decided at Secretary's level either of the States Ministry or even of other Ministries. On some occasions matters have been mentioned in the Cabinet. Generally, however, Cabinet has been informed after something has been done or a part of something which has been done.<sup>3</sup> We have received, as you have pointed out, various reports contained in White Papers placed before Parliament. All this has been very helpful.

In effect, however, matters have tended more and more to be decided at Secretary's level. Secretaries have important functions to fulfil, but they can hardly be called upon to decide major matters of policy. They have to carry out the policy decided by the Cabinet or by a special committee of the Cabinet. I think that the States Ministry has done a remarkable amount of work with a great measure of success. But, in the nature of things and in view of the abundance of the problems that face them, this work was hurried and sometimes not thought of in connection with our major policies.

As regards the Part 'B' States which have some kind of a legislature, they approximate somewhat to our old provinces, though even there is a considerable

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Replying to Nehru's letter of 19 October (published in *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 184-186), Patel stated that initially efforts were made to establish a constitutional relationship between the Government of India and the former princely States, and after the formation of States' Unions and Chief Commissioners' Provinces, "a form of Government...as near as possible to the standards of democratic Government" was achieved despite a multitude of problems.
3. Patel wrote, "At every stage ... we had discussed fully all the implications with various Ministries at Secretaries' level both in respect of policy and of procedure. Major questions of policy were invariably referred to the Cabinet and important matters not referred to the Cabinet have been included in the weekly and monthly summaries to the Cabinet."

difference and a good deal of burden of decision falls on the States Ministry. Those States, however, which have no legislatures are in a very peculiar position. They have either Ministries or they have official administrators. In either event they function in all matters under the advice of the States Ministry which can only be given on major matters. Thus, these States, for a number of functions, are officially governed without the normal detailed checks of official government.<sup>4</sup> I cannot, for the moment, suggest an alternative. But, I would say that where there is no backing of a legislature, it should be recognised that they are the direct responsibility of the Central Government and to be dealt with as such. Otherwise there is a camouflage and a measure of irresponsibility creeps in. As you have yourself repeatedly told me, the standard of officers in many of these States is not high. So we get a certain irresponsibility added on to relatively low standards, and this at a time of rapid changes when new problems continually confront us. A running machine working in certain grooves can function even with second-rate officers and direction. But during changing times and repeated crises, this is likely to be an inadequate arrangement.

A place like Hyderabad stands rather apart from others. This is not only because of its bigness, but also because its problems are special and peculiar to itself and the fact that we had to coerce it into submission has led to this question having an international significance. A great many very important developments have taken place there which have not been considered outside the States Ministry and certainly not by the Cabinet or a committee of it. The situation was difficult there and continues to be so. That would indicate a greater necessity for wider consultation before any major step was taken.

It is difficult to refer every matter to Cabinet, though important policies should be discussed there. It is possible, however, to have a committee of the Cabinet for this purpose. As an additional step we might have such a committee. Perhaps, for the present, our Foreign Affairs Committee<sup>5</sup> might consider those problems as to how we should proceed about it.

Yours.  
Jawaharlal

4. Patel had stated that there was no alternative to the existing set-up in States such as Pepsu and Rajasthan where duly elected legislatures had not been formed.
5. It consisted of Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, C. Rajagopalachari and N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar.



**MATTERS OF ADMINISTRATION****I. Indian States****(ii) Hyderabad**



1. To Vallabhbhai Patel<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
November 29, 1950

My dear Vallabhbhai,

There is one aspect of the Hyderabad problem which is troubling me greatly. I discussed it with Vellodi<sup>2</sup> and he had no solution to offer. I suppose a solution is difficult, but the alternative to finding a solution is still more difficult.

This relates to the large-scale unemployment caused in Hyderabad by various causes: (1) disbandment of the army; (2) removal of a considerable number of people in the Civil Services, including police; and (3) land reforms relating to the *Paighas*, etc., which, I am told, has also let loose a considerable number of unemployed.

Quite apart from the humanitarian aspect of this problem, there is the eminently practical aspect. These people, more especially the soldiery, are obvious material for communist propaganda. Distress and misery will drive them to bad courses. Being trained soldiers, they would be particularly dangerous elements if they go wrong.

It seems to me, therefore, that very earnest thought should be given to this matter and at least an attempt made to provide for these people. I should have thought that the process of causing this kind of unemployment should go slow and, in addition, a positive attempt be made to provide some kind of employment to those who become unemployed.

So far as I know, not even a gesture of this kind has been made. I think that a committee for this purpose should be formed in Hyderabad, preferably presided over by the Chief Minister and consisting of a number of non-official representatives, apart from some official ones. The Army might be represented upon it also. People should be made to feel that we are doing something and are anxious to help them.

Some funds were collected in Hyderabad for Assam relief. This was good, but it does seem odd that Hyderabad should not think of assisting its own unemployed and send money to a distant place for relief.

I have a vague idea that our Defence Ministry is giving some thought to the question of disbanded soldiery. I hope this is true. I am writing to Baldev Singh<sup>3</sup> about it, but in addition to that what I have suggested might be done.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

1. J.N. Collection.

2. M.K. Vellodi, at this time the Chief Minister of Hyderabad.

3. The Defence Minister.



## 2. To N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 23, 1950

My dear Gopalaswami,<sup>2</sup>

Gopalaswami<sup>3</sup> of the Home Ministry brought a file to me today about Hyderabad Services. I had a talk with him and then suggested to him to see you, as this concerns Hyderabad.

I found from this file that one of the objectives aimed at was what is called "dispersal" of Muslim officers apparently to other parts of India. Another thing was to fill a large gap in the Services by transfer of people from Madras, Bombay and Central Provinces.

So far as this policy of "dispersal" is concerned, I must say that I have the strongest objection to it. I do not mind, of course, Muslim officers who are competent being sent elsewhere in India. That I would welcome, but evidently the motive underlying this is somewhat different and is communal. I think, therefore, that this policy should be definitely put down.

If there is a real need for competent officers from other States to be sent to Hyderabad, we should naturally take steps to this end, although it is not easy to get good people from other States. But I think we should go slow and only get them in case of proved necessity. There is a strong feeling in Hyderabad that outsiders are important there and local people, either in the Service or outside, are kept away from any positions of responsibility. We started in Hyderabad by military occupation and by placing some kind of an army of occupation there. It is now said that the civilian army of occupation from outside is taking possession of Hyderabad. That is a bad impression to create, and it comes in the way completely of a return to normalcy. Our object obviously should be to make people there, Hindus and Muslims, forget, as far as possible, their upheaval, and to feel that they have a future in the State. This applies much more to Muslims because they have been completely shaken up and almost broken in spirit. There are large numbers of Muslim ex-civil servants or ex-employees in Hyderabad now who have been pushed out. They constitute a special problem. But, apart from their problem, the general impression that Muslims have no future in the State or very little of it is bad for them and for the State and for India.

Again, however competent, an outsider knows nothing about local conditions. He is looked upon almost as an alien. He may not know the language. The

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.
2. N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar was the Union Minister for Railways and Transport at this time. He also took up the charge of the Ministry of States on 26 December 1950.
3. R.A. Gopalaswami was Special Secretary (Reorganisation) and Census Commissioner for India at this time.

official language in Hyderabad has all along been Hindustani, although the local languages are Telugu, Marathi, etc. The result is that a newcomer really cannot give his best and takes some time to fit in, if he fits in at all.

I have little doubt that some, at least, of the men we sent there for high offices behaved in Hyderabad as if they were in a conquered territory. They created a very bad impression. Many of the lower officials as well as police who were sent from other provinces, were definitely third-rate and even corrupt. They have left a very bad impression. I think, therefore, that we should go a little slow in this process of changing and should use, wherever we can, local talent, even though that might not be quite up to the mark. Of course, for a really responsible post we must have a competent man, but even that competent man should have the right outlook and not that of a boss from outside showing his contempt for the people and specially the Muslims, as is often done.

The so-called Ministry in Hyderabad, I regret to say, is not a particularly happy combination. Some persons are good in it, others are very communal in the Hindu sense. The result is that the Ministry itself often does not take a right view and encourages some of the top servicemen to go in a wrong direction....

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru





**MATTERS OF ADMINISTRATION****I. Indian States****(iii) Rajasthan**



1. To Vallabhbhai Patel<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
October 26, 1950

My dear Vallabhbhai,

I have received your letter of October 25, 1950,<sup>2</sup> together with a file about the criminal cases and administrative charges against Shri Jai Narain Vyas, Shri Mathuradas Mathur<sup>3</sup> and Shri Dwarkadas Purohit and the case against Shri Manikyalal Verma. In view of the importance of these cases and charges and the public reaction to them, I have gone rather carefully into these papers. I have read fully the papers relating to the criminal charges. I have not read as fully the papers dealing with the administrative charges, though I have formed a fair idea about their contents.

Even apart from the opinions expressed by Shri Chatterji and Shri Bhandarkar, the impression I gather is that the charges, especially the criminal ones, were trivial and difficult to substantiate.<sup>4</sup> In view of this, it is worth inquiring who was responsible for this. From the administrative charges, one gathers the impression that the ministers concerned were extravagant and showed favour in some appointments. At the most this should have resulted in a private inquiry by an outstanding person and an admonition. Of course, if a clear case of misbehaviour was discovered, some other action could have been taken. For criminal charges of a trivial kind to be suddenly launched and a multitude of administrative charges framed (many of these of little importance) against persons who had been functioning as ministers, appears astonishing. The obvious course was, if there was suspicion, to have a private enquiry in which the persons concerned were given every opportunity to explain and clear themselves. Evidently this was not done and my first reaction is that some one must have been particularly interested in these prosecutions.

We have to be very careful about the standards of ministers and it is right that we should pull them up if they stray from the straight path. But we have to be equally careful that our ministers are not harassed and persecuted and that they have our protection if need arises. In the present case proceedings were started evidently without due inquiry and care and the object appears to have been not that justice be done but that certain persons should be punished.

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

2. Patel asked for Nehru's advice as to how best to dispose of certain criminal cases which included charges of embezzlement of public money against Vyas, Mathur and Purohit, ex-ministers of Jodhpur state, and Verma, ex-Chief Minister of the old Rajasthan Union.

3. (b. 1918); lawyer; participated in the Lok Parishad movement in Jodhpur; Minister, Rajasthan Government, 1951-71; President, Rajasthan P.C.C., 1959-62.

4. A.B. Chatterji, Joint Secretary, Ministry of States, and K.Y. Bhandarkar, Solicitor to the Government of India, were of the view that none of the charges except one could be established.



Petty police officials carried out inquiries to make out a case.<sup>5</sup> In spite of all this we find that there is not much of a case and all our labour has been in vain, and a good deal of public money has been needlessly spent. On the other side, the persons concerned have no doubt suffered greatly in mind, in reputation, in their public life and in money. These are serious consequences.

These persons concerned were not only ministers but some of them were also our old colleagues in the national struggle who deserved at least fair treatment and a just consideration. I confess I feel greatly distressed that this should have happened. That distress is not merely in regard to the persons concerned, but more so about a system which produces such mistakes and injustice. These particular cases have been frequently discussed and criticised in public, reference has been made to them on several occasions in the Congress Working Committee, and, I think, I have also inquired about them in the past. If, in spite of all this, wrong steps can be taken and persisted in, then surely there is something very wrong about the machinery which is responsible for all this. If important men can be dealt with in this way then one wonders what happens to less known persons.

The question therefore arises as to who was responsible for initiating these proceedings. The officials or others concerned should be asked to explain.

Another question arises. Are there other cases of this kind or like nature in the old States which have been officially started or encouraged? We must immediately examine all such cases to find out where we stand. Delay means further involvement and more embarrassment for us.

I would beg of you therefore to have this inquiry made. More particularly, to find out the responsibility for suggesting and starting the cases against Jai Narain Vyas and others.

It is clear to me that all these cases against Jai Narain Vyas, Mathuradas Mathur, Dwarkadas Purohit, and Manikyalal Verma should not be proceeded with and should be withdrawn.<sup>6</sup> There is nothing substantial in them and the longer we carry on with them, the more trouble they will give us, apart from undesirable public consequences.

I realise the difficulty you have pointed out about withdrawing these cases at this stage. But whatever the difficulty, we cannot allow injustice to continue. The manner of withdrawal should be considered carefully. I do not think that the Working Committee should be brought into the picture or be made responsible for any action taken.<sup>7</sup> That would be a bad precedent. It would be perfectly

5. Patel wrote that criminal cases were started in court against the ex-ministers following an inquiry made at his instance by an officer of the Special Police Establishment.
6. On 20 January 1951, Vyas was unanimously elected as party leader to form a new ministry in Rajasthan and on the same day the cases against him and two other ex-ministers were allowed to be withdrawn by the State Government.
7. Patel had suggested this.

right for the Working Committee to consider such a matter before it goes to court, but not after. The Working Committee should, however, be informed of the action taken and the reasons for it.

The ex-ministers should of course be asked to reimburse the amounts they have drawn in excess.

These are my definite views after going through the papers. I suggest, however, that Rajaji might also be consulted before final action is taken....

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

## 2. To N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 27, 1951

My dear Gopalaswami,

I am sorry to trouble you while you are so busy with the Railway Budget. But my mind has been rather full of Rajasthan and other like places during the last few days. I wrote to you about this and you were good enough to send me an answer about the possibility of early elections. That might be investigated.

2. But that is only one small part of the problem. I have a feeling that existing conditions are bad and that they are not likely to be improved under the present set-up. I have seen a considerable number of people from Rajasthan during the last few days. The matter was discussed in the Working Committee and the Parliamentary Board also and many questions were put to me which I was unable to answer. There was a widespread feeling that the *status quo* should not be maintained<sup>2</sup> and that a popular Ministry should come in.

3. On top of this general feeling of unease that I have had, I have experienced a bit of a shock. This shock came on my reading an order issued by the Revenue Secretary of Rajasthan dated 22nd January 1951, copy of which I enclose. This order restores certain powers and privileges of the jagirdars which had been taken away by an ordinance sometime back in Udaipur. It appears to go even a little further than that.<sup>3</sup>

4. My mind goes back to the numerous occasions when I have spoken strongly from the platform of the States Peoples Conference and in the Congress

1. J.N. Collection.

2. After the fall of Hiralal Shastri's Ministry on 3 January 1951, a civil servant became head of the interim ministry.

3. The executive order of 22 January 1951 not only restored the old rights of the jagirdars which had been taken over in 1948 but also allowed them to acquire new legal rights.



against the jagirdari system. I have addressed jagirdars in Rajasthan on the subject and frankly expressed my views to them. Largely at my instance the Congress made this one of its basic programmes. If a promise could be made in such matters, we made the promise repeatedly of putting an end to the jagirdari system. Regarding Hyderabad, I emphasized this aspect repeatedly and something was done there.<sup>4</sup> In Udaipur the ordinance taking away certain powers of jagirdars was passed after Sardar Patel had approved of it. This ordinance did not go very far and it was a beginning only, but it was greatly appreciated by all, except of course the jagirdars affected. One would have expected further action to be taken in the rest of Rajasthan in this matter. Now, even the action previously taken is set aside and there is a going back upon it. This is apparently done within two or three weeks of the present official set-up after the Hiralal Shastri Ministry resigned. It seems to me exceedingly unwise for this caretaker Government to upset and go back upon reforms previously introduced. This is a matter of larger policy governing not only the old States but the new States also.

5. I am told that many forests were given back to jagirdars by the Shastri Ministry. Why this was done is not clear to me.

6. The impression created in my mind is that the present Government of Rajasthan and officers generally are very pro-jagirdars. That also is the complaint of many people from Rajasthan. Whether this action is due to fear of the jagirdars or to a decision on the principle itself, I do not know. In either case it seems to me wrong. We are hardly likely to deal with the jagirdars' intransigence by appeasement, and in any event this will have a very bad effect on the people generally.

7. There is another matter which has been brought to my notice. I do not know anything about it, but I am passing on what I heard. This was in regard to the selection of candidates for the Rajasthan Administrative Service.<sup>5</sup> Apparently an attempt was made at some new kind of integration of this Service by selecting from those already in it and a new order of seniority was fixed. According to my information, this selection and grading has led to curious results. Junior officers have suddenly shot up and their erstwhile superiors are under them. I am all in favour of merit and I do not attach very great importance to seniority by itself. But the merit must be obvious. Some instances were given to me. There was the Commissioner of Jaipur Division. His subordinates have apparently

4. In September 1949, administration of all the jagirs in Hyderabad state was taken over by an administrator after their abolition under the Jagir Abolition Regulation and by March 1950 the process of their integration was completed.

5. The Rajasthan Administrative Service was created in 1951 through integration of services of the merging States with hardly any criterion for judging the suitability of the officers or for fixing their seniority.



been placed above him. The Deputy Director of Agriculture with seventeen years' service has been declared surplus and a new man with four years' service appointed in his place. A Tahsildar, Shiv Dutt by name, has been selected for the R.A.S., although there has recently been an enquiry against him for corruption. At the same time a confirmed S.D.O. has been pushed out. Sometimes people with relatively high educational qualifications, such as MAs, have not been selected while matriculates have been selected.

8. It is stated that the Services are very much upset by this and the administration is not at all working satisfactorily because of this dissatisfaction.

9. Rajasthan is at the present moment suffering from a number of evils. The law and order situation is bad and perhaps deteriorating. Daylight robberies take place on a big scale. I am told that yesterday, 26th February, there was a daylight raid on a village called Sardarshahr near Bikaner, where the raiders came on 55 camels. There have been pitched battles with dacoits. Apparently the demobbed soldiers have also taken to evil ways. The jagirdars are becoming aggressive and giving trouble. The food situation is bad and procurement difficult.

10. I am beginning to doubt very gravely how far the present official set-up can possibly deal with this situation, when you add popular discontent with it also and lack of cooperation of the public. The general political and economic outlook of the present-day administration appears retrograde and reactionary and this will make them still more unpopular. Presently the budget will be framed or it may have been framed already.

11. All this leads me to think that a change is necessary. I had agreed previously to the proposal to have a Service Chief Minister, etc. But in the circumstances there will be no harmony or pulling together. Certainly not with the existing people. I doubt if newcomers could be fitted in. If that is so, then the only alternative appears to be a Ministry without any Service people (except as advisers). The Ministry should be as broad-based as possible, though inevitably the Congress element must dominate.

12. These are the ideas that have been floating about in my mind and I am putting them before you for your consideration. What worries me chiefly is the general outlook of our officials towards these essentially human problems involving popular reactions. Whatever step we take or do not take, risks are involved. If so, then that risk is better which is based on some principles and which at least can be justified publicly.

13. I think V.T. Krishnamachari might be able to give us useful advice with his knowledge of Rajasthan.

14. I am writing to you only about Rajasthan now, but the other places have to be tackled also. Rajasthan appears to be the first priority.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### 3. To N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 28, 1951

My dear Gopalaswami,

You must have received a copy of Rafi Ahmed Kidwai's letter to me about jagirdari affairs in Rajasthan.<sup>2</sup> I wrote to you about this yesterday. I think this Executive Order that has been issued is likely to give us a lot of trouble, not only in Rajasthan but elsewhere, and something has got to be done about it very soon.

You will be busy all day in Parliament tomorrow. Perhaps we might meet immediately after, say, about 5 p.m. in my room there.

Apart from Rajasthan, I should like to discuss some Hyderabad affairs. Bindu,<sup>3</sup> the President of the Hyderabad Congress, has seen you. He saw me today also. Some days ago Zain Yar Jung<sup>4</sup> saw me. Both of them drew my attention to the 5,000 teachers who have been thrown out and asked to learn the local languages within the next two years. This appears to be a very extraordinary way of dealing with this situation. It would have been fair enough to ask them to learn the language while continuing in service. But to throw them out and then ask them to come back two years later and meanwhile appoint other people in their place, can only mean that they have been dismissed for good. 5,000 teachers means about 25,000 persons affected and joining the unemployed. It is an open invitation to them to join the communists or some other subversive groups. Apart from the human and political aspect of it, this appears to be most unwise and inexpedient. Unemployment is assuming terrific proportions in Hyderabad. Not all the police or army in Hyderabad can deal with this problem by forcible methods. Some other outlook is necessary. There appears to me to be something radically wrong about the way things are done in Hyderabad.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Kidwai, at this time the Union Minister for Communications, protested that the order of 22 January 1951 was inconsistent with the recommendation of a committee appointed by the Government of India in 1949. He thought the order could not have been issued without consultation with the States Ministry and feared that the jagirdars were being strengthened in their fight against the Congress.

3. G. Bindu Digambar Rao; conducted "Join Indian Union" movement, 1947-48; President, Hyderabad State Congress, 1948-52; Member, Hyderabad Legislative Assembly, and Home Minister, 1952-56.

4. (1889-1961); architect; Agent General of Hyderabad state under the Standstill Agreement; Minister for P.W.D. and Railways in the Military Government, Hyderabad, 1949.

**MATTERS OF ADMINISTRATION****I. Indian States****(iv) Baroda**





## 1. To the Maharaja of Baroda<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 10, 1950

My dear Maharaja,<sup>2</sup>

I have received your letter of the 7th December as well as copy of the letter addressed by you to the President of India.<sup>3</sup>

In your letter to me you refer to the welfare of the people of India, including the subjects of Baroda state, and also to the grievances of your people. In your representation to the President, the whole argument is about certain constitutional developments which, according to you, have set aside certain rights that you exercised by virtue of your sovereignty over your state. There is no mention in the representation of the people of India or of Baroda. The whole representation, therefore, deals with certain personal rights which you claim to have had previously. The question raised by you, therefore, is strictly a legal and constitutional one.

I confess that I have read your representation with considerable surprise, because it seems to proceed on a basis which is completely unreal and which has little relation to the major developments that have taken place in India resulting in the establishment of the Republic of India. Right at the beginning you refer to certain statements made in various documents issued by the United Kingdom Government, and you base your claim on these statements as well as on a presumed sovereignty in regard to Baroda. I should like to point out that we are not governed in India by any statement made by the U.K. Government at any time. Further that at no time have we recognised the sovereignty of any Indian Ruler of a state. We are governed solely by the law of the land, as contained in our Constitution. In addition, we have sought to give effect to the assurances we have given. Your argument, therefore, appears to me to be completely vitiated by a wrong approach. That argument is a challenge to our Constitution, to our Republic, and to our basic tenets that all authority is derived from the people.

I am not dealing with any legal technicalities but only pointing out certain obvious considerations which govern our action. Considerable changes have taken place in India, and indeed in the rest of the world, during the last few

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Pratapsingh Gaekwad (1908–1968); ruler of Baroda state from 1939 until its absorption in the Bombay province; was deposed in 1951 and succeeded by his eldest son, Fatesingh.
3. The Maharaja stated that the agreement of 21 March 1949 signed by him had only provided for the administration of Baroda as a separate entity by or under the authority of the Dominion Government and not for its merger or integration. He said that his rights and prerogatives had been eroded and “wrong” measures were proving detrimental to the interests of the state and its people.

years, and the present position can only be understood or viewed from the point of view of these changes. What the British Government may or may not have done, is of historical interest, but has no relevance in understanding this present position in India. The Republic of India is sovereign and has full authority over the whole territory of India and can do what it chooses. The power of that Republic is exercised through the elected representatives of the people in the Parliament and within the limits laid down by the Constitution. That is the only test that can be applied. If the Constitution proves to be inadequate in any respect, it is open to Parliament to amend it in the manner laid down. No other authority can interfere or challenge the right of Parliament in regard to any territory in India.

We are concerned very greatly with the welfare of the people of India, and if there are any grievances of the people, it is our duty to attend to them and remove them. But no challenge to the authority of the Republic or of Parliament can be entertained by us.

I hope you will appreciate that your approach to this entire question is a wrong one.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 2. To the Maharaja of Baroda<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 31, 1950

Dear Maharaja,

I have received your two letters of December 25th and 30th.<sup>2</sup> I am leaving for England early tomorrow morning. But before I go, I wish to reply to your letters briefly.

The question which you have raised has to be dealt with formally by the States Ministry and they will no doubt give their attention to it. Your representation to the President has also to be dealt with by the Government of India which, in this matter, is represented by the States Ministry. If a Cabinet question

1. J.N. Collection.

2. The Maharaja expressed surprise at receiving a reply from V.P. Menon, Secretary, States Ministry, to his representation to the President refuting the allegation that the merger and integration of Baroda had taken place without the Maharaja's concurrence. Menon stated that the Government had taken "a very serious view" of the stand taken by the Maharaja and would have to consider whether to allow him to continue to enjoy his status and position when his attitude amounted to "repudiation of the Constitution."



arises, then the whole Cabinet considers it. Under our Constitution, the President is the honoured Head of the State, and the power vests in the Government.

I do not propose to go into the legal and semi-legal issues raised by you in your letters. That is for our law officers to consider. But, writing to you as Prime Minister, I feel I must tell you that your approach to these matters appears to me to be wrong. The recent meeting of certain rulers in Bombay<sup>3</sup> has led, as you will no doubt have noticed, to a great deal of unfavourable comment in the newspapers. It is the right of every individual citizen of India to make a representation or complaint. But no one, whoever he might be, can challenge the authority of the State and the Constitution. It is within the four corners of that Constitution only that we can consider any representation.

You refer to the "sovereignty" of rulers. At no time have we acknowledged this sovereignty and indeed there are plenty of occasions when we have expressly stated that there was no such thing. If the British Government, from their own point of view, used the word, "sovereignty" on any occasion, that had no effect on us whatever and did not either change the factual position or our opinion of it. In any event, the only sovereignty that can be recognised in India today is that of the people of India and this is represented in the Parliament of India.

Apart from these matters, it surprises me that you should ignore so completely the vast and revolutionary changes that have taken place in the world and continue to occur. No Government in any country, to my knowledge, after a great change as took place in India, has treated the rulers or their equivalents so generously as the Government of India has done. In this matter, the Government went against public opinion and perhaps you are aware that Sardar Patel had to bring all the pressure of his great personality to bear on Parliament here to make them agree to the proposals of Government. The fact to be remembered always is that Parliament in India is the supreme authority.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. The Maharaja told a session of the Council of the Union of Rulers, of which he was Chairman, at Bombay on 27 December that there was no reason why the merger of states "should have necessarily resulted in not only throwing most of us out of occupation" but also in a complete severance of their ties with their people.



MATTERS OF ADMINISTRATION

II. Law and Order





## 1. To Vallabhbhai Patel<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 1, 1950

My dear Vallabhbhai,

...There is, however, one matter that you mention which has a certain importance. You say that interference at a late stage is apt to demoralise the administrative machinery.<sup>2</sup> Of course it is normally not desirable to allow a matter to proceed far and then interfere. But surely the main objective should be always to see that a right decision is arrived at. If a mistake is discovered at any stage, it should be corrected. Whether a mistake has been made or not is a question of fact and judgment. I do not see why the administrative machine should be upset or demoralised by such rare instances. After all, the final judgment in such matters must rest with the Ministers....

There is no question that it is the right of Government to get rid of a foreign person who is considered undesirable. The whole question is in what circumstances a person should be considered undesirable for this purpose. While ultimately it is a matter of judgment, that judgment is based on certain definite data and should not be a mere impression or the judgment merely of police officers who, in the nature of things, have not got a political background or an appreciation of many aspects of a case, which are not before them. Action of this kind taken has certain consequences. Our own people abroad are likely to be treated in a like way and then we resent it.

I remember the case of a Chinese school-master who was, I believe, ultimately deported from India, in spite of strong and repeated protests of the then Chinese Government. Dr Lo<sup>3</sup> came to the Foreign Office repeatedly begging us not to take any step. He actually shed tears on one occasion. We stuck, however, to our decision, I think wrongly, and thus affected somewhat our relations with the old Government of China.

In reading police and intelligence reports, I come across frequently accounts of people I know very intimately. I have read with surprise and some amusement the comments in the report about these persons. These comments are often

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

2. Nehru had suggested on 19 November reconsideration of a decision to deport a Soviet national in view of only vague suspicions about him. Patel replied on 30 November that to change the decision after its having been taken with the concurrence of the Ministry of External Affairs and Nehru's approval of it would make officers of both the Ministries feel let down.

3. Lo Chia-luen was Ambassador of Nationalist China in India.

quite wide of the mark, as I know from my personal knowledge. Hence one has to be a little careful about these judgments.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

## 2. To C. Rajagopalachari<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 25, 1951

My dear Rajaji,

I have been much worried about Gopalan's<sup>2</sup> case in Madras. I do not know anything about Gopalan, but the mere fact of his rearrest immediately after his release and within a few yards of the High Court building,<sup>3</sup> does give one a shock. This is the kind of thing that creates a great deal of prejudice against us. Coming so soon after the Preventive Detention Act it will not add to our reputation.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

1. J.N. Collection.
2. A.K. Gopalan (1904–1977); associated with the Indian National Congress in Kerala, 1927–34, and Congress Socialist Party, 1934–36; joined C.P.I. in 1939; in jail, 1946–51; member, Lok Sabha, 1952–77; joined C.P.I. (M) in 1964.
3. Gopalan, detained by the Madras Government in February 1950 under the Preventive Detention Act, was released on 22 February 1951 on his questioning the legality of the detention order, but was rearrested immediately under a new Preventive Detention Act which had received the President's assent that very day.



## MATTERS OF ADMINISTRATION

## III. Corruption



## 1. To Vallabhbhai Patel<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 13, 1950

My dear Vallabhbhai,

... I have repeatedly had Members of Parliament coming to me and complaining of corruption, etc. I have always told them that I am prepared to enquire into any allegation provided it is specific and has some *prima facie* basis for it.<sup>2</sup> Whenever any such story comes to me, I refer it immediately to the Ministry concerned. The investigation machinery should only be started if some preliminary proof is obtained. I have felt that no charge or allegation, whoever might be concerned, should go unheeded. This is most unfair to the person whose name is dragged in. Whispers go round and it is said that Government is afraid of taking action....

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

1. J.N. Collection Extracts.

2. Patel wrote to Nehru on 11 December that investigations into corruption charges should be initiated "only when the information is *prima facie* credible and the antecedents of the informant are above taint of suspicion." He objected to action on allegations against a State Chief Minister being taken at the instance of Nehru as such methods were likely to undermine the position and prestige of the person concerned.

## 2. To C.D. Deshmukh<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 9, 1951

My dear Deshmukh,

With reference to the proposal to abolish the Enforcement Directorate,<sup>2</sup> I feel that such a negative step would be harmful, unless some positive steps are taken to deal with the problem of corruption. I think that the Enforcement Directorate has, on the whole, done good work, though this could have been better still if they had additional powers. I have been in touch with some of

1. J.N. Collection.

2. The Enforcement Department was set up under the Ministry of Industry and Supply for strict enforcement of controls imposed on certain commodities in September 1948.



these people and discussed their problems with them. In any event, this is not a question to be viewed purely from the point of view of economy. The only real test is how best we can control corruption and create the right psychological impression in the public mind. I think we should consider this whole question fully. I am prepared to discuss it with the Estimates Committee.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## MATTERS OF ADMINISTRATION

## IV. Prohibition





## MATTERS OF ADMINISTRATION

### 1. To P.S. Kumaraswami Raja<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
November 9, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

I enclose a copy of a letter from Dr Homi Bhabha, the eminent scientist, which might interest you.

I am greatly distressed to learn of the cutting down of trees round about Ootacamund.<sup>2</sup> I think that this kind of thing is almost a sacrilege apart from being very harmful.

The second part of Dr Bhabha's letter deals with the kind of application which has to be made for permits under the Prohibition Act.<sup>3</sup> I think the criticism is justified and this kind of discrimination between various communities should be avoided, more especially after the Bombay High Court's judgment.<sup>4</sup>

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. From File No. 31(18)/56-PMS and 7(102)/48-PMS.
2. Bhabha pointed out on 2 November that a large number of magnificent trees had been cut down in Udagamandalam on the pretence of cultivation of land and suggested that an ordinance forbidding indiscriminate cutting of trees be immediately issued.
3. Bhabha thought it was scandalous for the Madras Act to make fine distinctions between various categories of foreigners and different Indian communities in the granting of liquor permits and that the Prohibition policy was promoting dishonest practices.
4. On 22 August 1950, the Bombay High Court held as void the exemption given to Defence messes and canteens and distinctions made between citizens in the Bombay Prohibition Act; but the exemption of foreigners from the Act "though undesirable in a way" was no violation of the Constitution.

### 2. To D.P. Mishra<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 30, 1950

My dear Dwarka Prasadji,

I am exceedingly sorry for the delay in answering your letter of the 10th December.<sup>2</sup> I have been overwhelmed with work and quite unable to cope with my correspondence.

1. File No. 2(244)/48-PMS.
2. Mishra, Home Minister of Madhya Pradesh, wrote that drinking had assumed more insidious forms despite Prohibition introduced in several districts of the State since 1938. He added that the revenue lost due to Prohibition could have been used for developmental work and suggested adoption of a more rational policy of rationing besides mobilisation of public opinion and raising the standard of living and culture of the people.

Your letter is a cogent argument for going back on the policy of Prohibition. More than two years ago I advised strongly against extending Prohibition in Bombay and Madras. My advice was ignored. I am quite clear that introducing Prohibition in the way it was done was an unwise step. Financially, of course, this was so. but we cannot make finance the final consideration in a matter of social morals. However, sometimes we have to balance even social morals. Thus, for instance, I think bad housing, or no housing at all, is a greater evil for the community than even drink. If the money from excise was used for two or three years for good housing, it would have improved social conditions much more than any attempt to stop the drink habit by law.

But, apart from this, I do not think that this kind of legislation stops the drink habit. You have yourself given reasons for this. We know, to our cost, that illicit distillation is going on all over the place.

I am, therefore, entirely at one with you that we should reconsider our policy of Prohibition for a variety of reasons. Among these reasons is to deal more effectively with the drink habit. The only thing to be considered is the manner of proceeding in this matter. Any attempt to scrap Prohibition completely would undoubtedly lead to a public outcry from many Congressmen and the like. Therefore, this change of policy should be a well thought out one with some kind of an alternative offered.

In England and in some other countries of Europe, even in war time, drinking has become much less than it used to be. This is due to a number of causes, one of them being that alcoholic drinks are far more expensive. Also it is not considered good form to drink too much, that is, public opinion does not approve of it. Nevertheless, the revenue from the drinks has gone up tremendously. Both alcoholic drinks and cigarettes, cigars and tobacco are taxed terribly heavily. Indeed, many people have had to give up smoking because they cannot afford it. You will be surprised to know the revenue from duties on alcoholic drinks and cigarettes, tobacco, etc. In England, this amounts to about £ 900 million, that is, about three or four times our total Central revenue. Indeed, England would have collapsed but for this source of revenue.

I am, therefore, quite agreeable to any step that you might take as indicated in your letter. I might inform you that I am dealing with this question in a broad way in my fortnightly letter this week.<sup>3</sup>

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. See *post*, pp. 626-627.

## MATTERS OF ADMINISTRATION

## V. General





1. To B.C. Roy<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

November 29, 1950

My dear Bidhan,

...You have written to me about the state of our Defence forces and the extreme undesirability of our reducing them.<sup>2</sup> There is no question of drastic cuts as you suggest. But there has been the question of our disbanding some of our weaker and newer battalions, which were not part of the regular army. Defence is not a matter of numbers of soldiers. It is an equation: defence forces plus industrial production plus economic position plus morale of people. If we reject any part of this equation, the rest becomes weak. It is of the utmost importance that there should be a balance and that we should push on industrial production which is the backbone of defence. With our limited resources, we cannot do everything. Indeed what is happening is that our Army cannot be properly equipped and is deteriorating. It is far better to have a well-equipped and very mobile army, even though slightly smaller in number, than a larger army which is not properly equipped and cannot move about easily. All these factors have to be considered and we have been giving a great deal of thought to them. None of us wants to take the slightest risks in the difficult situation which we face today. The whole point is that we should be as strong as possible to deal with it.

There is no question of our being weak in West Bengal,<sup>3</sup> but please remember that there is also no question of our fighting a war in West Bengal only. In any event, the vital theatres of war are likely to be different. The international situation is one full of peril and the chances of a world war have increased. We want to be the strongest possible to meet this situation but strong in various ways and not just in one way.

Yours,  
Jawahar

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

2. Writing on 27 November, Roy criticized the reported move to effect reductions in the Defence forces and said that a strong defence was essential for development including increased food production. He feared that disbandment of regular and experienced troops in inaccessible areas like Cooch Behar and Tripura would weaken the defences of the areas.

3. Roy stated that in view of developments in East Bengal, Nepal and Tibet, the defence arrangements of West Bengal should be recast.

## 2. To K.G. Mashruwala<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 17, 1950

My dear Kishorilalji,<sup>2</sup>

Thank you for your letter of December 11th.

So far as I can remember, the quotation you have given is from a speech I was delivering to the House on foreign affairs.<sup>3</sup> There was a loud demand for larger armies and a protest was made because we were trying to save on defence expenditure. I pointed out that the best defence was the morale of the country. Of course, in the circumstances, we had to keep armed forces and we intended keeping them up to the mark. But defence ultimately consisted of not only armed forces, but the economic condition of the country, the industrial potential and the morale of the people. In this connection I referred briefly to sugar, etc., and said that there was far too much excitement about it. I was not dealing with this question.

What you say in your letter is perfectly true.<sup>4</sup> But, if I may say so, it is not the whole truth. The Government may be, and no doubt is, in error in many ways. But the Government ultimately functions through a vast number of functionaries, big and small, and it has to deal with a still vaster number of the public. I am sorry to say that I have this feeling that there is utter lack of discipline among our people, including the functionaries, and the standards are low. Even today conditions about food, etc., are worse in many European countries. Sugar is hardly obtainable. But there is a realisation there that first things come first and so there is less of grumbling. Of course, there is far greater discipline there.

I am not thinking so much of our peasant classes or the great majority of our population,<sup>5</sup> but rather of those that are called the middle classes. I was referring to these in my speech.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Mashruwala was at this time the editor of *Harijan*.
3. Referring to Nehru's remarks in Parliament on 7 December about the inability of the people to put up with controls on essential items of food despite their shortages (see *post*, pp. 439-440), Mashruwala felt that Nehru had unjustly admonished the common people of the country as they were used to putting up with severe hardships and were capable of great sacrifices.
4. Mashruwala wrote that corruption in the system of licences and controls was leading to the moral degeneration of the people and wide disparities in the standards of living and was causing popular resentment.
5. Mashruwala wrote that the lower classes other than the organised factory labourers were living in an abject condition. "If you were in their position, it is possible you would lead them to raise a rebellion."



### 3. To B.G. Kher<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 22, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

You will remember perhaps my writing to you more than a year ago about horse racing and the breeding of horses.<sup>2</sup> This was necessitated by certain proposals of your Government to take action in regard to betting at horse races, which would have resulted in affecting both racing and breeding.

I shall be grateful to know how matters stand now. I drew your attention then to two important factors. One was the necessity of breeding horses in India and doing nothing which might come in the way. This was important both from army and other points of view. If this was not done, we would have to import horses. The horse breeding industry had slowly built itself up in India and it would be a pity to put an end to it. It seemed clear that horse breeding would suffer if racing suffered and racing would suffer if betting was stopped.

The second point was the loss of revenue to the State. In existing circumstances any such loss is a matter of even greater concern than previously. Of course money should not be taken into consideration where high principles are concerned. But I fail to know any high principle involved in this matter. Indeed several States are encouraging racing in India and even the President's name has been associated in some of these races. The economic position is so bad that any step which might worsen it is to be strongly deprecated. The Central Government feels rather strongly about it and therefore I am writing to you on this subject.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. File No. 40(211)/51-PMS. A similar letter was sent to P.S. Kumaraswami Raja, Chief Minister of Madras.
2. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 11, pp. 16 and 21-24.

#### 4. To Rajendra Prasad<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 30, 1950

My dear Mr President,

You may have noticed in the press that a message of good wishes was sent to the Hindu Mahasabha<sup>2</sup> on your behalf. I was surprised to read this and I immediately referred to Government House and asked what had been done. I was informed that a message had been sent in the routine way without any reference to you. A copy of that message was sent to me and I was much surprised to read it. It was rather effusive and totally uncalled for. Even a routine message was not necessary in the circumstances. The invitation that had come for you was not a special personal invitation, but a kind of a circular letter which should have been consigned to the waste-paper basket.

You will have noticed also the widespread criticism in the newspapers of this message, more especially because of the activities of the Hindu Mahasabha at their conference which were very objectionable. At my suggestion, Government House issued a small note<sup>3</sup> to the press which you may have seen.

Thus this incident, owing to lack of foresight, became a political issue for the moment about which comments were made in India and Pakistan. The *Dawn* wrote a leading article on it.<sup>4</sup> I suggest that some steps might be taken to prevent any recurrence of such a *faux pas* which may have serious consequences. Any invitation for you which has a political significance has to be carefully considered before an answer is sent. Answers to invitations have to be brief and non-committal and not the type of answer that was sent to the Hindu Mahasabha's invitation. Thus, all these invitations have to be considered from the political point of view, apart from other points of view.

I am anxious that the President's high office should not be brought into the realm of political controversy and hence my desire to draw your attention

1. J.N. Collection.

2. It was reported on 25 December that the President had sent his best wishes on the occasion of the annual convention of the All India Hindu Mahasabha in Pune from 24 to 27 December.

3. Issued on 27 December, the note stated that the message had been sent by the President's office as a routine acknowledgement without the President's knowledge.

4. Criticising severely the President's message, *Dawn* commented on 27 December that if a similar organisation grew up in Pakistan advocating use of force against India and persecution of Hindus, the Governor-General would never bless it.



to this particular matter which must have embarrassed you as it has embarrassed us.<sup>5</sup>

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

5. Rajendra Prasad wrote from Wardha on 31 December that he was himself surprised to read about his "so-called message" as he was unaware of any invitation to him and said that he would consider on his return how to prevent a repetition of such an action.

## 5. To V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 4, 1951

My dear Krishna,

You will remember my urging you to come to India as soon as possible and your ultimately agreeing to do so. I should like to know when we may expect you here. This period is one of additional difficulties for me and I am overburdened with work. Nevertheless I should like you to come soon. You can choose your own time and suit your convenience. I shall be in Delhi most of the time except for brief weekend visits to other places. I should like you to stay here some considerable time. Therefore make adequate arrangements at India House for the period of your absence.

You spoke to me in Paris about the Supply Department and gave me an illuminating survey of its work. I wish you could have given me a note on this subject, because I cannot remember all the details and figures that you gave. Anyway you could have some such note sent to me now.

As you know, our Finance Minister is frantically searching for ways of reducing expenditure and it is quite likely that he may make suggestions which are not either feasible or desirable. He is open to reason and argument provided facts, etc., are supplied. That is one reason, among others, why I wanted you to come here.

There is one proposal that in regard to some relatively minor items ordered through Supply Departments in London or Washington,<sup>2</sup> where there are agents

1. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. The Central Supply Organisation had agencies in London and Washington to make purchases in the U.K., Europe and the U.S.A. Out of total purchases worth Rs 1,120 million during April to December 1950, purchases made through the India Stores Department, London, and the Indian Supply Mission, Washington, amounted to Rs 200 million and Rs 320 million respectively.



of firms here, it might be more expeditious and perhaps more economical to deal with them directly. This could hardly apply to the major items. From this a conclusion is drawn that it might be possible to reduce the staff of the Supply Departments in London and Washington. All this is rather vague and it is difficult to discuss it without facts.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

## 6. To V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 27, 1951

My dear Krishna,

A few days ago, a Member of Parliament wrote to me about the purchase of a considerable number of second-hand jeeps some two years or more ago.<sup>2</sup> I did not know anything about this and I promised to enquire about it. I referred the matter to the Finance Ministry and the Defence Ministry. They have sent me a large number of papers dealing with it, including some notes by the Auditor-General.<sup>3</sup> I sent for H.M. Patel<sup>4</sup> and he gave me some kind of a connected story.

As a result of all this, it seems to me that we were the victims of certain rather unusual circumstances. Nevertheless this whole business makes one feel uncomfortable and it is no easy matter to explain it to enquirers. What troubles one is the way some things were done which landed us in this difficulty. Of course our need was great and we had to go through abnormal channels. Nevertheless we were rather badly caught and it is not easy to justify all this to the public, if occasion arises for that.

H.M. Patel told me that even now this matter has not been finalised and some new contract was to be signed, if it has not been signed already. Apparently he sent you a telegram ten days ago about this to which there has been no

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Krishna Menon was charged with having shown favour to a party given a contract in 1948 for the supply of more than 2,000 reconditioned jeeps for urgent use by the Army in Hyderabad. The first 155 jeeps on delivery in March 1949 were found unserviceable and the remainder of the order was cancelled resulting in a loss of £ 143,162.

3. V. Narahari Rao.

4. Secretary, Ministry of Defence, at this time.

reply. I wish this could be expedited so that we might know exactly where we are and can tell Parliament so when an enquiry is made. I am writing to you because I think we shall have to give the major facts to our Party at least if not to Parliament.<sup>5</sup>

I wrote to you sometime ago about the Supply Department and asked you to send me a full note on this subject.<sup>6</sup> I wish you would have this done soon. The question comes up in various forms repeatedly. I have little doubt in my mind of the necessity of this Department continuing. You convinced me of this in Paris. But I cannot carry in my mind all the facts that you gave me. Admitting the necessity for the Department, various other questions arise. It is clear that one cannot have proper purchasing and inspecting agencies at various places and this must be concentrated in London or in Washington. But in regard to matters not requiring special inspection, would it not be desirable to save time and expense to deal with one of our other missions directly where the purchase is going to take place? Probably this would relate to relatively minor purchases. Some cases have been brought to my notice from our foreign missions when we would have saved money and time by this direct method. I have not verified them.

We are seriously thinking, with a view to economy, to wind up some of our minor Missions in Europe, or possibly to double them up with others. We are also reducing our staff at headquarters to some extent.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

5. The matter was later raised in Parliament and eventually dropped as enquiries found nothing definite against Krishna Menon.
6. See the preceding item.





## BACKWARD CLASSES AND TRIBES

### I. Backward Classes



## 1. Facilities for Backward Classes<sup>1</sup>

So far as the first point is concerned, that is, educational and economic facilities to Backward Classes,<sup>2</sup> whatever their religion or caste might be, this has been made clear repeatedly and I have recently addressed Chief Ministers on the subject.<sup>3</sup> The only differentiation between them and other backward groups who are called the Scheduled Castes, should be in regard to certain political rights, such as separate representation. This fact should be made as clear as possible to all State Governments....

1. Note to the Principal Private Secretary, 10 December 1950. File No. 2(238)/48-PMS. Extracts.
2. A memorandum from the Christian Members of Parliament to the President urged that the Harijan converts to Christianity should not be deprived of the educational, social and economic assistance given to other Harijans.
3. See *post*, pp. 612-613.

## 2. To Gopichand Bhargava<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 5, 1951

My dear Gopichandji,

For a long time past I have had visits, from time to time, from Harijans in Rohtak district. They have complained about the ill-treatment they have been receiving from the Jat zamindars who, according to them, have been oppressing them and making life very difficult. Evidently these Jat zamindars do not approve of any improvement or advance on the part of these Harijans. I remember these people coming to Gandhiji also. Then last year, some ten months ago, some of them came here and went on hunger strike because the Jat zamindars had proclaimed some kind of a social boycott of them which made it difficult for them to carry on any vocation or even to buy or sell. Ultimately, on some assurance being given to them that their grievances would be looked into, they broke their fast.

Some of our prominent local Harijan workers here in Delhi told me that they have enquired into these grievances and have found them to be true. Apart from the general ill-treatment that these Harijans receive, they have a

1. File No. 33(14)/48-PMS.



special grievance about the levying of a professional tax upon them. I am told that this tax is only levied on incomes of Rs 300 and more and the tax on Rs 300 is Rs 3. But I am told that, without any justification, taxes of Rs 20, 30 and even Rs 50 are levied on some Harijans, although their income does not justify this at all. This tax is apparently used just to harass and oppress them.

I feel that these charges are serious and they are substantiated by independent observers here who have gone to Rohtak to enquire. Something, therefore, must be done about this matter. According to reports, the local officials of Rohtak district side with the Jat zamindars and do not give any relief. It thus becomes the duty of the State Government to give this relief and make the Harijans feel that justice is being done to them. That has not only been our policy for many years but is a part of our Constitution now. I hope, therefore, that you will kindly enquire into this matter immediately. More particularly, the complaint about the professional tax deserves immediate enquiry and action.<sup>2</sup> It is a simple matter and it should not be difficult to find out what the facts are. If any substance is found in the charge, the levying of this tax might be suspended pending further enquiry.

I am going to ask our Special Commissioner<sup>3</sup> for the Scheduled Classes and Tribal Areas to visit Rohtak himself as soon as he can manage it.

One of the persons who came to see me was Lala Chandi Ram of the Gandhi Harijan Ashram in Rohtak. I have referred him to you.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. Nehru was informed on 12 March that henceforth Harijans and backward classes would be assessed at a flat rate of three rupees per annum and not on a graduated scale as was being done earlier. The assessment would also be done in consultation with village panchayats to avoid arbitrary assessment.
3. L.M. Shrikant.

**BACKWARD CLASSES AND TRIBES****II. Tribal Policy**





# 1. To Jairamdas Doulatram<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
January 25, 1951

My dear Jairamdas,<sup>2</sup>

Thank you for your two letters of January 22nd and 23rd. I have read the account of Eastern Tibet, which you have sent, with interest.

The letter from the President,<sup>3</sup> Naga National Council, has been cleverly drafted.<sup>4</sup> Who is the person who is responsible for this draft or for advising the Nagas? We shall have to be careful in dealing with this matter. There is reference in this letter to the slaughter of Nagas in cold blood by our army. To what does this refer? Also there is reference to the Government of India's habit of arresting Naga political workers in Indian cities. What is this?

I do not know if you have any competent or reliable men in Nagaland. The British used to have such people all over the place. But Indians do not like these out of the way jobs and seldom have the competence to deal with the people like the Nagas. Anyhow I should like to know what your contacts are.

I do not think we can wholly ignore any widely spread sentiments among the Nagas. Obviously there can be no question of their independence. But there might well be some question of autonomy. If the Nagas want to send representatives to see you, you should see them and talk to them. If they wish somebody to come to Delhi, facilities should be given to them and I shall meet them.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

2. He was the Governor of Assam at this time.

3. A.Z. Phizo (1900-1990); leader of the Naga rebels; founder-member of the Naga National Council and its President from 1949; fled to Britain in 1956 and remained in exile till his death.

4. On 1 January 1951, Phizo informed the President of the resolution of the Naga National Council of 11 December 1950 to hold a plebiscite in Nagaland to decide on constituting an independent sovereign State.

## 2. To Jairamdas Doulatram<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 2, 1951

My dear Jairamdas,

Your letter of January 30th. From what you write to me, there was no occasion for misunderstanding. However, I hope this has been cleared up.

About the Nagas, I am not sufficiently acquainted with the position to offer any advice. That is for you and your Chief Minister to decide. What I wrote to you was rather the general principle of approach. I am convinced that we should have a friendly approach always as far as possible, and only resort to strong action when this is unavoidable. The Nagas are a tough lot and have given and can give a lot of trouble. Wherever trouble occurs it has to be dealt with but any verbal or written propaganda should not normally be considered as trouble of this kind, and opportunities of discussion should not be ruled out....

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

## 3. To Bishnuram Medhi<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 2, 1951

My dear Medhi,

I am in receipt of your letters of January 29th and 31st in regard to the transfer of the plains portions of the Frontier tracts. After the correspondence you have had with your Governor, there is no need for me to discuss the contents of your letters. If the President's sanction has not been given already, I shall see that there is no further delay.

2. I wrote briefly today to the Governor about Naga affairs. After writing to him, I had a discussion about these matters with Shri Sri Prakasa<sup>2</sup> and R.V. Subramanian, Secretary to your Government for Tribal Areas in Assam.

1. File No. 21/1/51-Poll., M.H.A.

2. He was Governor of Assam from February 1949 to May 1950.



Subramanian explained to me the situation and told me that A.Z. Phizo, the President of the Naga National Council, was becoming more and more troublesome. He had begun now to talk in terms of violence. It had been suggested, therefore, that action might be taken against him individually. Such action to be, in the first instance, to pass some orders restricting his movements and, in case he disobeyed those orders, to take court action against him.

3. The Governor has hinted to me in one of his letters that for the present you did not intend to take this action but to try other methods of approach. In this matter, it is obvious that you and your Government are the best judges of the present situation and of the action to be taken. Perhaps if I was with you and could discuss this matter at some length, I could offer useful advice. But I would hesitate to do so from a distance and without full knowledge of the facts. I would like, however, to tell you what my general feelings are about these Naga tribes as well as other similarly situated people.

4. Generally speaking, I am against any hurried attempt to absorb such areas into what is called the normal administration. Such tribes have a definite culture and way of living of their own and any attempt to break it might well lead to a rapid disintegration of the tribes. They are unused to the so-called civilisation and economy of, what are termed, more advanced areas. They cannot easily adjust themselves to the new conditions and so they fall between two stools: having lost the old, they have not got the new. This has been the experience in dealing with tribal and rather primitive people in various parts of the world. New Zealand tried to deal with the Maoris in this way with the result that the Maoris began to die out. Subsequently the policy was changed and the Maoris have begun to make good in many ways. Some of them have adjusted themselves to new conditions and play an important part in the political and other life of New Zealand. Most others preserve their old customs and ways and yet do not come into conflict with the rest.

5. It is important to remember that these tribal customs and ways, though primitive in a sense, are sometimes more advanced in other ways. They belong to a different type or genre of society and because they belong to a different type, they cannot easily be adjusted. A Harijan may be low in the scale of society in India but, on the whole, he fits in some grade or other and can rise step by step in the same framework of society. Not so the tribal folk who are socially, economically, mentally and psychologically different. The British treated them as anthropological specimens to be kept for museum purposes and not interfered with. That was an extreme way of dealing with the situation which is not desirable, though it had some virtue in it. The other extreme way is to begin to treat them like any other citizen. This sounds democratic and good. But in effect it puts a tremendous burden on them because they are totally unsuited to compete with the acquisitive economy of other regions and



other persons who exploit them and oppress them. Therefore, a middle way has to be found.

6. That middle way should be to interfere as little as possible with their natural way of living and customs, to protect them from the exploitation of others, and at the same time to open out ways of advance to them by educational and other social methods—schools, hospitals, roads, etc. The whole point is that there should be no attempt to break up their social structure and adequate protection should be given to them from aggressive elements in other regions. Thus their land should be protected and such tribal democratic customs that they might have should be allowed to function. They must have a definite sensation of not being interfered with and at the same time of help being available.

7. In other words they should have a considerable measure of autonomy within large limits.

8. These are general considerations to all primitive folk in India. But such primitive peoples and tribes differ greatly among themselves and therefore the application of these general principles will necessarily vary. My own impression of tribal people generally in Assam is that in some matters they are remarkably developed. They have a kind of primitive but none the less advanced democracy among themselves. They are well disciplined and they are fairly tough. I wish that most of our people in India had that measure of democracy and discipline and toughness. It would be unfortunate if these qualities that the tribal folk in Assam possess are in any way discouraged or suppressed.

9. The Nagas, again, form a very special section of the tribal people in Assam and their problems are peculiar to themselves. But they too have that internal democracy and sense of discipline and they are probably tougher than the others. They are sensitive and proud and jealous of such freedom as they have. They resent interference with it. Some of them are still in the head-hunting stage. They are very different from the people of the old North West Frontier of India. But, to some extent, they offer the same problems. You will remember that the North West Frontier tribes have, for hundreds of years, given trouble to whatever Government controlled in India. The British, in spite of every effort, could not wholly suppress them and ultimately agreed to a more or less independent belt between what was called the British India and the Durand Line.

10. I do not wish to carry this comparison far because conditions are very different. Nevertheless, there are similarities, more especially because of the frontiers. We have therefore to be rather careful in our dealings with these people, lest we produce a problem which may pursue us for long years later. I am sure that essentially our approach should be friendly and not coercive. The latter approach will not succeed easily and will be a tremendous burden

to India and Assam. We have to win these people over as a whole and make them feel that we are not interfering with them, but only trying to help them, where they want help.

11. This being the general approach, how is it to be applied? Naturally we should try to give them schools, hospitals and communications, etc., but even this should be done in a friendly way with their cooperation so that they might not feel that it is an attempt to exploit them. This is the policy of the Assam Government and so far as it goes it is all right. Great care has however always to be taken that the Nagas do not feel at any time that the Assam Government or people are trying to deal with them as some inferiors or subordinates or trying to submerge them in the sea of humanity, that is, Assam or India. I believe there is some feeling of this kind among the Nagas already as well as perhaps among the Assamese. If this grows, it will lead to dangerous consequences and continuing bitterness and conflicts. Your Government and your people should therefore try their utmost to remove this feeling. The approach must be one of understanding and vision, not thinking only of today's problems but of tomorrow also and the day after.

12. The position of Nagas on the frontiers of Burma and China makes the problem more delicate. I do not know if any Nagas live on the Chinese side. I rather doubt it. But they certainly live on the Burmese side and probably they are still less controlled there than on the Indian side.

13. The present position is that Sir Akbar Hydari and Bardoloi gave their assent to a nine-point agreement<sup>3</sup> with the Nagas and signed it. This agreement does not wholly fit in with the Sixth Schedule.<sup>4</sup> Personally, I think, this is not a very important matter. If necessary, we can even make a special provision in the Constitution, provided we consider this desirable. The Sixth Schedule was a general one and if any difficulty arises in applying it in a particular area, there is no reason why we should not make some variations, either in law or in practice. What we should consider is the right solution of the problem, quite apart from the nine-point agreement or the Sixth Schedule.

3. The understanding arrived at on 29 June 1947 between Akbar Hydari, the then Governor of Assam, and the Naga leaders broadly acknowledged the autonomy of the Nagas with the Naga Council and Naga courts enjoying predominance vis-a-vis the application of Central or provincial laws in matters of social beliefs and practices, civil and criminal cases, and alienation of land to a non-Naga. The Naga Council was made responsible for the imposition, collection and expenditure of land revenue and house tax, and was free to control whatever executive matters it was prepared to pay for. On 22 June 1948, a written assurance was given by the Governor and the Chief Minister of Assam about the full implementation of the arrangements, which were to continue for ten years.
4. The Sixth Schedule of the Constitution provided that the administration of the Naga tribal area would be carried on by the President through the Governor of Assam as his agent who shall act in his discretion.



The importance of the nine-point agreement is that the Nagas consider it as a kind of charter and any attempt on our part to repudiate it (as I believe Bardoloi tried to do later to some extent) would be deeply resented by the Nagas. They would consider it a breach of faith on our part. It is true that the Government of India never agreed to it and subsequently we passed a new Constitution. But this argument will not convince the Nagas in the slightest. Once they become convinced that they cannot trust our word, then it will be difficult to deal with them. Therefore we must not treat this nine-point agreement as something which can be wholly ignored, even though we seek to vary it. That variation should come in a friendly way by agreement.

14. At the present moment we have to face a demand by the Naga National Council, under the Presidentship of A.Z. Phizo, for independence. That is an absurd demand, which we cannot accept. For the present, however, because of the discipline of the Nagas, there will be general support of that demand, although a minority section may not feel keen about it. That minority is likely to submit to the majority. I suppose very few of the Nagas really know what they mean by independence.

15. Our general reply to them might be that we are anxious to preserve as large a measure as possible of their autonomy and their way of living and have no desire to interfere with it. Our only desire is to help. But to talk of independence has no meaning and we cannot accept it.

16. Phizo is a troublesome and obstinate person. In his memorandum he has said that he has been prevented from seeing the President and others in Delhi and he is afraid of being arrested, etc.<sup>5</sup> I think that he might be told that if he or his colleagues wish to come to Delhi, they can do so. There is no point in his seeing the President, but I am certainly prepared to see them. I am not inviting them to come here, nor should you invite them to do so. But you can tell them that they are free to come to Delhi and they need not be afraid at all of arrest or any other action taken against them because they come to Delhi.

17. Apart from this, Phizo should be told that while we have no desire to interfere with a peaceful and constitutional agitation, we cannot tolerate any incitement to violence. If this continues, action will be taken to restrict his activities and movements. If he continues to preach violence, then that action should be taken which should be in the nature of an order restricting his movements. If he obeys this order, well and good. If he breaks the order, then he should be proceeded against in the courts. That will be an individual procedure and the Naga National Council should not be touched.

5. Phizo stated in his letter of 1 January 1951 to the President that Naga representatives seeking audience with the Governor-General or the President had been prevented from doing so. So the letter was being sent through the Governor of Assam.



18. It is for you to judge what the consequences of such action will be among the Nagas. Subramanian tells me that nothing much will happen except perhaps some protests and processions.

19. I am very anxious that we should not be compelled to use punitive measures against the Nagas, as sometimes we have had to do in the past. Of course, if there is an active rebellion, we have to take steps to put it down. But our policy should be such as to prevent this happening. Thus any action taken should be individual action and should be accompanied by an assurance to the others that we have been compelled to take this action because of the preaching of violence or other objectionable activities and not because we wish to interfere in any way.

20. If such action has to be taken, it should be followed up by a constructive approach to the problem. In the event of Phizo wishing to come to Delhi, of course the necessity for any action does not arise and you should wait for his return. You need not worry about his visit to Delhi or as to how he might behave here. I am competent enough to deal with him.

21. I have written to you a long letter on this subject. I hope it will give you some ideas of what I have in mind. For the rest, as I have said above, it is for you and your Government to decide as to what should be done. I am sending a copy of this letter to your Governor and another copy to Shri Sri Prakasa.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

#### 4. To Bishnuram Medhi<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 3, 1951

My dear Medhi,

Very late last night I dictated a long letter to you, chiefly dealing with the Naga situation.<sup>2</sup> This letter, as a matter of fact, has not yet been despatched and is being typed. Meanwhile, this morning, I received your letter of the 1st February with all its enclosures. Thank you for it....

1. File No. 21/1/51-Poll., M.H.A. Extracts.

2. See the preceding item.

I have already written to you separately about the Naga situation. I would only add here that I think very probably you will have to take action against Zapu Phizo. But I have suggested to you in my other letter the line of action you should take. This is, briefly, that you should tell him:

- (1) that while you have not interfered with any peaceful and constitutional activities, your Government is informed that violence is being preached by him and some of his supporters. This is bad enough anywhere, but more especially so among the Nagas, and you do not propose to tolerate it. Therefore, if this incitement to violence continues, you would have to take measures to restrict his activities.
- (2) that if he wants to come to Delhi to see any representatives of the Government of India, he is at liberty to do so. There will be no obstruction placed in his way. That is to say, you do not invite him to come here nor do we invite him, but if he wants to come of his own accord, he can do so. We shall know how to deal with him, and you need not worry about that. You may also tell him that while you and we are prepared to discuss with him any problems relating to the Nagas, including the measure of autonomy they should have, there is no question of our considering his scheme for independence.

In the event of his continuing his incitement to violence later, you should restrict his movements. If he breaks that order, you should proceed against him in the courts. My other letter deals more fully with this situation.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 5. To Jairamdas Doulatram<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 4, 1951

My dear Jairamdas,

You must have received copies of my letters addressed to your Chief Minister about the Naga people. I should like to add for your particular information something that I hinted at in my other letters.

I am afraid there is not much knowledge or sympathy among the Assamese of the plains with these tribal people of the hills. The educated Assamese

1. J.N. Collection.



proper more especially lack this understanding and sympathy. One gets the impression that these educated Assamese rather want to boss over the people of the hills, and further that the State Government entirely sympathises with this viewpoint.

This is an utterly wrong approach and will simply lead to the alienation of the tribal folk. Once alienated, it will be very difficult to win them over and they can give an enormous lot of trouble. Thus this aggressive and superior policy is neither morally justified nor practically feasible. The whole approach should be friendly and every attempt should be made to win them over as friends and colleagues. It is for this reason that I would hesitate to take any strong action against them. Of course if we are compelled, we have to do it.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 6. To Jairamdas Doulatram<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 23, 1951

My dear Jairamdas,

...I have read with great interest your personal letter about your tour in the tribal areas. I am quite sure that this tour must have done a lot of good and I hope you will give a good deal of your time to these tribal folk. I have been attracted to them for a long time past. I am definitely of opinion that it is quite absurd to consider them inferior to the people of the plains. They may be undeveloped in some ways, but in some other ways I consider them more advanced. We should therefore help them in every way to maintain their spirit of independence and self-reliance. We ought to tell the other people how they can learn from these tribal folk and develop the spirit of self-reliance.

It would be a good thing if, as a first step, the proper names for these tribes were used, that is, the names they themselves use and not the names that have been planted upon them. Thus the Garos should be called Achik.

The account of your visit to the Khasi Hills is very interesting. These people are a fine material, if only we could approach them in the right way.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.





SOCIAL REFORM

I. The Hindu Code Bill





## 1. To B.R. Ambedkar<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
October 26, 1950

My dear Ambedkar,

Thank you for your letter of the 25th October together with a copy of the revised Hindu Code Bill. I should very much like this Bill to be passed during the next session. In order to do so, you should have some kind of a plan of campaign to make this revised Bill understood by people concerned and appreciated. I suggest that a brief pamphlet might be prepared pointing out the changes suggested and the effect of these changes. The pamphlet should be written in a conciliatory style so as to win public opinion of even those who have been somewhat hostile.

This pamphlet could be circulated to Members of Parliament and sent to the press. It is not necessary to print any large number of copies of it. I suppose a thousand copies would be enough.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

## 2. To B.R. Ambedkar<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 19, 1950

My dear Ambedkar,

I have your letter of the 18th.

You know how anxious I am to get the Hindu Code Bill through Parliament and I should like to do everything in my power to bring this about. I am afraid, however, that it will not be possible to convene the next session from the middle of January as you suggest. As you know, I shall be away for a good part of January in England. I rather doubt if I can return much before the 18th or possibly the 20th. On the 26th we have Republic Day and immediately after, there is going to be a long session of the All India Congress Committee at Ahmedabad. The last week of January is thus fully taken up. To meet about the 20th January for a few days and then break up again for a week or more, would hardly be profitable from any point of view.

1. J.N. Collection.

I have sounded some people about the possibility of a January meeting (without mentioning the Hindu Code Bill in this connection) and I have found strong opposition to it. They all want to go home for a while after the present session. The next sessions are likely to be long. I do not think it will be possible to induce most of them to come early.

Apart from all this, there are very urgent problems of governmental reconstruction which are facing us because of Sardar Patel's death. It is not merely a question of appointing someone for his portfolios but a somewhat larger question. I wish I was not going away to England in January, but I cannot avoid that now. On my return I want to have some time free from Parliament in order to look into these various important matters.

I fear therefore that it is not feasible to have a January session. We should meet as early as possible in February and we should make every effort to have the Hindu Code Bill considered then. I am perfectly prepared to extend that session for a fortnight or more for this purpose.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### 3. The Rights of Women<sup>1</sup>

The Hindu Code Bill is not a revolutionary measure. The Code has been pruned of many of its controversial sections. This was done because it was felt that in some respects of social reform at least we should go forward. Ultimately, women themselves will have to agitate to win their rights.

In the changing world of today no country can cut itself off from the changes, even if it wants to. If any society obstinately tried to keep itself shrouded in old ideas, customs and tenets, the current of revolution would sweep it away. This has happened in China, where unthinking rulers sought to suppress the new urges in men and women, urges to change society. These rulers failed to suppress the new urges of society in China to change with the changing times. They were swept away by the tide of revolution. So also will all those be swept away who close their eyes to the demand of changing times and adamantly turn their backs to changes. That society will decay and

1. Speech at a women's meeting, Ahmedabad, 31 January 1951. From the *National Herald* and *The Hindustan Times*, 1 February 1951.



with away and the irrepressible urge of the people will crush that society and it will be thrown into the dustbin of history.

The Hindu Code Bill has been before Parliament for a number of years. Some Members of Parliament are deadly opposed to it. But I cannot see any sense in that opposition, whatever they may say about the inviolability of old Hindu ideas. The old ideals and principles have their value and they have to be respected. It is also true that society has to adapt itself to changing times. If it does not, it will decay.

In fact, no nation which keeps its womenfolk imprisoned in the four walls of the house can truly advance. Old ideas about women remaining ignorant, as some isolated creatures, have been long exploded in the rest of the world. In India too, we have to give up such ideas. If, however, we do not, we should not smugly feel that we can continue to suppress the womenfolk for they themselves will revolt and a revolution will be upon us. So, as intelligent men, we should from now on try to make changes, where changes are long overdue.

Mahatma Gandhi was a true revolutionary. Though he valued old ideas, he always looked to the future and gave the right lead. In the battle for emancipation of women he played a big part.

#### 4. To Biswanath Das<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 19, 1951

My dear Biswanath Das,

Your letter of today's date sending me a cutting from *The Hindustan Times*. I am amazed to read the underlined portion.<sup>2</sup> Of course, I never said anything of the kind and could not have said it. What I said, in an entirely different context and nothing to do with the Hindu Code Bill, was that incompetent people utilised the name of religion to obstruct change.<sup>3</sup> This had nothing to do with the Hindu Code Bill. I might mention that I was speaking in Hindustani and the word I used was *nikamma*.<sup>4</sup>

1. J.N. Collection.

2. *The Hindustan Times* of 18 February reported Nehru as having stated in Lucknow the previous day that those who opposed the Hindu Code Bill were "most incompetent and worthless people."

3. See *post*, pp. 224-226.

4. Inert, idle.



Further, I had said that the Hindu Code Bill might be improved or some parts of it may be objected to and changed. But I was addressing myself not to a particular part of it, but rather to the general conception which I thought was good and should be given effect to. From that point of view, the Hindu Code Bill was some kind of a symbol of the social change that was desirable.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 5. To B.R. Ambedkar<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 19, 1951

My dear Ambedkar,

Your letter of the 15th February about the Hindu Code Bill.<sup>2</sup> I have been much troubled myself about the obstructionist tactics of some Members and the inordinate delay caused by them. It was to avoid this delay that we had gone through a process of consulting various groups and persons interested, and we had given up some important features of the Bill.

I am anxious that this Bill should become law and I would very much like this to happen during this session. But we have to be careful about the steps we take, because these very steps may lead to greater opposition and greater delay. In particular, I think that any reference to the Speaker<sup>3</sup> in this connection is bound to create further difficulties.

This session is a heavy one and there are important measures to be considered apart from the budgets. Still, it may be possible to find time in the course of the session. I am perfectly prepared to extend the session for this purpose.

I rather doubt if we can extend the daily sittings by two hours, as you suggest. The whole question of the time of the sittings is being considered by

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Ambedkar wrote that a "vociferous and obstructive minority" in Parliament was abusing the rules of procedure to prolong unduly the debate on the Hindu Code Bill and that the Speaker had aligned himself with this "reactionary gang." He criticized Nehru for not effectively putting down these opponents and declining to issue a whip and said that it would be "ridiculous, cowardly and humiliating on the part of Government" if the Bill were not passed in the current session despite Nehru's assurances.

3. G.V. Mavalankar.

the Speaker. There is a proposal that we should sit only during the afternoon, say from two to seven.

It is certainly desirable to improve our parliamentary procedure in some of the ways suggested by you. As I have said above, I would rather not bring the Speaker into the picture.<sup>4</sup>

I think the best course is for our Party to meet and consider what we should do to expedite the disposal of the Bill. You will remember that it was agreed that the Party should meet from day to day to consider the Bill and amendments on it. If we did that, I have no doubt that the parliamentary discussion would be very much curtailed. I suggest, therefore, that we should arrange for two or three meetings of the Party to consider this Bill clause by clause. After that we will be in a better position to ask the Party and then Parliament to lay down some procedure for more rapid disposal.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

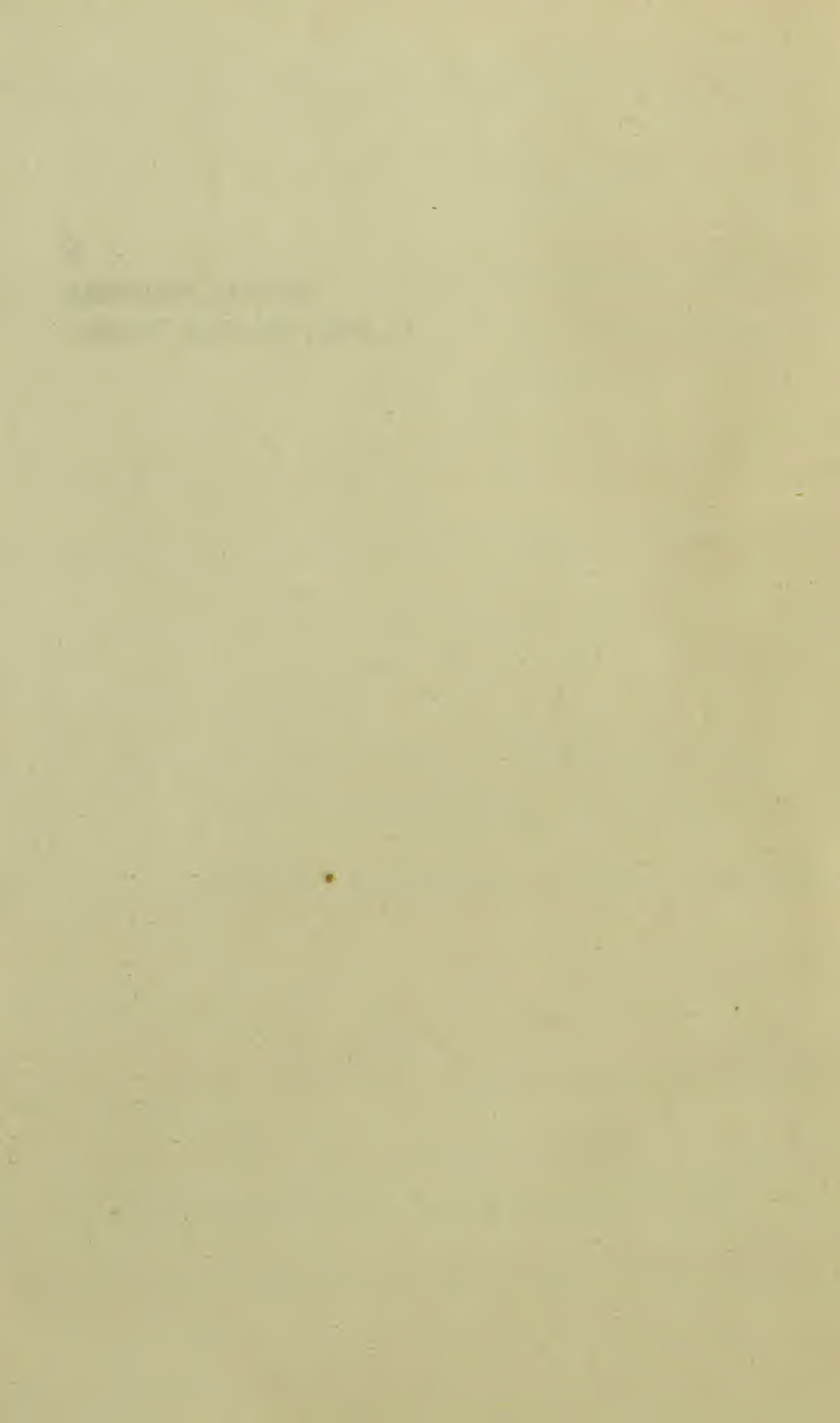
4. Asserting that most of the amendments tabled were "stupid", Ambedkar suggested that the Speaker should be asked to use his power under Rule 155 to place only selected amendments before the House. He also suggested changes in Rule 165 reducing the power of the Speaker to decide on the acceptance of a closure motion.





## SOCIAL REFORM

## II. Entry into Jain Temples



## 1. To B.G. Kher<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
October 27, 1950

My dear Kher,

You will remember that last year I wrote to you about some objections that certain Jains had raised in regard to some Bombay legislation. At the time you gave me some explanation, and there the matter rested. I understand that there have recently been some cases in the courts, where the question of entry in Jain temples was raised. These cases were started under Section 4(1) of the Bombay Harijan Temple Entry Act, 1947 (Act 35 of 1947). One such case was against Mulchand Ganeshmal Jain and others, and the judgment of the Magistrate is dated 30th August, 1950. This has gone up in an appeal to the Sessions Judge at Alibag.

I do not myself see how we can force any Jains to admit to their temples people who are not Jains. The question is not of caste Hindus and Harijans. Thus, the position should be that Harijans should not be accorded any different treatment from that accorded to other Hindus. It would be improper for a Jain temple to say that caste Hindus will be admitted and Harijans will not be admitted, but it seems to me quite proper for them to say that only Jains will be admitted and no others.

The same kind of question arose in C.P., and the Government there issued a notification to the effect that the C.P. & Berar Temple Entry Act of 1947 should not be applied to Jain temples.

I enclose some papers, including the judgment and the grounds of appeal, etc., in the case mentioned above. I shall be glad if you will kindly give some thought to this matter.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. File No. 33(94)/50-PMS.

## 2. To B.G. Kher<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
November 30, 1950

My dear Kher,

You will remember my writing to you about the attempts being made to enter

1. File No. 33(94)/50-PMS.



Jain temples forcibly. These attempts were based on the Bombay Temple Entry Act. I pointed out to you that, in this matter, the Jain complaint seemed to me completely justified. Indeed, the Madhya Pradesh Government had acknowledged this fact and issued instructions accordingly. You wrote to me that you would enquire into the matter. I had then sent to you a copy of a judgement too on the subject.<sup>2</sup>

I understand that these troubles are continuing and I am receiving complaints of attempts at forcible entry by non-Jains into Jain temples. The court punishes the Jains as they stop the intruders. I give below copy of a telegram received.<sup>3</sup>

I do hope you will put right this anomaly which is neither just nor expedient.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. See the preceding item.

3. Some Jains had been arrested in Solapur district for protesting against forcible entry of non-Jains into a Jain temple. A representative of the Jain community in Bombay requested that Mahatma Gandhi's assurance against forcible entry into temples be honoured and legal rights of non-Jains to enter Jain places of worship withdrawn.

6

SOCIAL REFORM

III. Women





## 1. The Role of Women in India<sup>1</sup>

Women play an important role in the development of a country. The status of women is the best criterion to judge the achievements, the civilization and the culture of a country. Indian women particularly will have to play a dominant role if the country is to achieve any glory.

Women exert a great influence on society. Indeed, they are the makers of the country's future, for children, the citizens-to-be, have a natural inclination to imitate their mothers till they grow up and are able to think for themselves. Women, therefore, have a tremendous responsibility for which they must prepare with great care while they are students. They should not confine themselves merely to the kitchen or the household in the narrow sense, but they must equip themselves with all that is necessary to make better homes, better families and a better society.

If you compare India with other countries, you will find that she lags behind not only the West but even Asian countries in many respects. In terms of wealth, India is, of course, a poor country and great efforts will be necessary to improve the material conditions. But, what is worse, as a people — be it in dressing, eating or walking — Indians show great sloppiness. In the social sphere, our people cannot act in a collective manner. Even in little household jobs, the sense of precision or proper upkeep is found wanting. Poverty alone cannot be the cause of it all, for I see the houses of quite wealthy people also kept in a clumsy manner. Money alone cannot sustain culture. A French woman, for example, even though she may be poor and living in a hut, would show a highly developed aesthetic sense while doing her day-to-day duties as a housewife.

Women are chiefly responsible for running the home and should know how to do this in an orderly and aesthetic way. To live plainly does not mean living shabbily as many in India do. Unfortunately most Indians do not know the art of corporate living and one of the main tasks now is to improve their social and aesthetic levels. This will have the added advantage of increasing national efficiency and self-confidence.

Most of these shortcomings of Indian life can be removed and new traditions set if only Indian women became worthy mothers, equipped with the learning and knowledge to enable them to properly guide their sons and daughters.

1. Address to the students of Indraprastha College, Delhi, on the occasion of the silver jubilee celebrations of the college, 12 November 1950. From *The Hindustan Times* and *The Statesman*, 13 November 1950.

The future of the country greatly depends on your abilities and achievements. I, therefore, strongly urge you to so mould yourselves with a certain determination and purpose as would enable you to build up the India of tomorrow.

You should, however, always pitch your ideals to realizable heights. It is the manner in which a people go about their usual everyday tasks that indicates their worth, rather than their ability to talk about high ideals which are never attained. India is said to be a country of saints and sages. This has led people to place their objectives so high that no proper efforts are made to attain them. That attitude must now be discarded. The general standard of the majority of the people must be raised and only then the country will grow in stature. Merely by boasting about the past or by claiming a few first-rate talents, even though that is also a source of strength, the country cannot rise to greatness or attain glory, just as mere schemes, slogans or laws cannot help a country make progress. What ultimately counts is the character and determination of its individuals to work for achieving greatness. I hope young women will always keep these ideals before themselves wherever they are after completion of their education.

**CHILDREN AND YOUTH****I. Children**





## 1. Training Children for the Future<sup>1</sup>

May I ask you to inculcate a sense of discipline and social conscience among children. Do not impose on children high ideals, nor should you expect of them to be mature in mind when they are so young and innocent; what is wanted at present is that their minds are so trained as to make the children self-reliant and enable them to face the realities of life as they grow up.

I dislike the idea of paying too much attention to children and doting on them. Children should not be kept always in bondage of love and affection, but should be trained to become rough and tough. Then only will they face the ups and downs of life when they are grown up.

There is growing indiscipline and irresponsibility among students particularly in the north. Some students take the law in their own hands on the slightest provocation. They sometimes cause riots and start purposeless strikes and force the authorities to concede their demands, good or bad. This indicates that something is wrong with the present system of education. If modern education tends to make students irresponsible and rebellious, then woe unto us.

If students want to go their own way while they learn, then I am prepared to scrap all universities and colleges, which would then serve no purpose. Let them run their own universities and conduct them as they like.

We must visualize a picture of tomorrow's India. The little ones whom we train today will fill that picture. If we want our country to become a first-rate nation, we must have first-rate men at the helm and in all walks of life. We must help young minds develop on the right lines so that they grow to be conscious of their responsibilities to the country and to society, without which no nation can progress.

We must teach our children not to be ashamed of their mistakes. As we notice the faults in foreigners, so do foreigners find faults in us, and we must therefore try to rectify them. Children should be helped to develop such a spirit and such an attitude as would lead them to know their faults and make them remove those faults.

Balkan-ji-Bari may have ministers on its committee but the Government as such should not be associated with its activities.<sup>2</sup> Governments work in

1. Speech at a meeting of social workers and educationists at Balkan-ji-Bari, Bombay, 6 November 1950. From the *National Herald*, 7 November 1950.
2. Earlier, Lady Rama Rau, welcoming Nehru, said that the organisation was devoting itself to the welfare and moral rehabilitation of the school children and others belonging to weaker sections. She pleaded for greater cooperation from the public and for Government assistance.

their own typical ways. Sometimes your requests might go from department to department and get lost in the process. Do you want your valuable work to get stuck in this manner?

Children should be encouraged to run the organization themselves. They must understand its problems and make efforts to fight them though, of course, they must be helped and guided by adults from behind.

## 2. The Strength of the Unafraid<sup>1</sup>

What a troublesome person Shankar<sup>2</sup> is! Every few days I get a reminder from him that I must write something for the children's number or else he himself appears and looks at me with reproachful eyes. Here I am trying hard to get through a great deal of work before I leave for England on the 1st of January. On top of this, I am expected to write articles. Shankar seems to forget that most of my writing has been done in the leisure of prison. Since I came out of that small prison and entered the larger prison of office, my freedom to read and write has been taken away from me. I cannot do many of the things that I would like to do, and I have to do much that I intensely dislike.

I suppose Shankar knows all this, but he has got an idea into his head that something from me must appear in the children's number. Well, I am bound to confess that I like this idea of the children's number very much and I should like to help it to grow. I liked the last number<sup>3</sup> and I am almost sure that the next number will be better.

What pleases me most of all is the great interest that children in distant countries have taken in this venture. I was surprised and delighted to visit an exhibition where hundreds of pictures and cartoons sent for Shankar's children's number were exhibited.

As I looked at these pictures, I thought of the vast army of children all over the world, outwardly different in many ways, speaking different languages, wearing different kinds of clothes, and yet so very like each other. If you

1. Message for children, 27 December 1950. From *Shankar's Weekly*, children's number, December 1950.
2. K. Shankar Pillai, founder-editor of the weekly.
3. For Nehru's contribution to *Shankar's Weekly*, children's number, December 1949, see *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 14 Part I, pp. 579-580.



bring them together, they play or they quarrel. But even their quarrelling is some kind of play. They do not think of differences amongst themselves, differences of class or caste or colour or status. They are wiser than their fathers and mothers. As they grow up, unfortunately, this natural wisdom gets covered up often by the teaching and behaviour of their elders. They learn many things at school, which are useful no doubt, but they forget gradually that the first thing to remember is to be human and kind and playful and to make life richer for ourselves and others. We live in a wonderful world, full of beauty and charm and adventure. There is no end to the adventures that we can have, if only we seek them with our eyes open. So many people seem to go about their lives' business with eyes shut. Indeed, they object to other people keeping their eyes open. Unable to play themselves, they dislike the play of others.

Our own country is a little world in itself with infinite variety and ever so many places which we can discover. I have travelled about a great deal in this country from north to south and east to west, and I have grown in years. And yet I have not seen many parts of this country that we love so much and that we seek to serve. I wish I had more time to visit the odd nooks and corners of India. I would like to go there in the company of bright young children whose minds are opening out with wonder and curiosity, as they make new discoveries. I should like to take them with me not so much to the great cities of India but to the mountains and the forests and the great rivers and the old monuments, all of which tell us something of India's story. I would like them to realise that we can play about in the snow in some parts of India and we can also go to other parts where tropical forests flourish. We would have a voyage of discovery of the beautiful trees in our forests and on the hillsides and the flowers that grace the changing seasons and bring life and colour to us. We could watch the birds and try to recognise them and make friends with them. But the most exciting adventure would be to go to the forests and see the wild animals, both the little ones and the big. Foolish people go with a gun and kill them and thus put an end to something that was beautiful. It is far more interesting and amusing to wander about without a gun or any other weapon and to find that wild animals are not afraid and can be approached. Animals have keener instincts than man. If a man goes to them with murder in his heart, they are afraid of him and run away. But if you go with friendly feelings, they realise that a friend is coming and do not mind him. If you are full of fear, then the animal gets afraid too and, in his fear, he might attack. The fearless person is seldom, if ever, attacked.

Perhaps that lesson might be applied to human beings also. If we meet other people in a friendly way, they also grow friendly. But if we are afraid of them or if we show our dislike to them, then they behave in the same manner.

These are simple truths which the world has known for ages past. But, even so, the world forgets and the people of one country hate and fear the people of another country, and because they are afraid, they are sometimes foolish enough to fight each other.

Children should be wiser. At any rate the children who read Shankar's children's number are expected to be more sensible.

**CHILDREN AND YOUTH****II. Students and Youth**





## 1. Build a New India<sup>1</sup>

I do not quite know what to talk to you about. I can go on, of course, talking for a long time because whenever I meet young people from my country I want to share with them my thoughts about our problems and our difficulties, what we seek today, where we have failed and so on, for the burden of carrying on will very soon fall on their shoulders. We are a passing generation, the High Commissioner<sup>2</sup> and I. Many of us who have been associated with public work in India, whether as agitators or subsequently as a part of the Government machinery or as constructive workers, we cannot carry on in any capacity for very long; maybe a few years more, and necessarily others will have to carry this burden. Those others must come from among the people who are in universities today, in India and elsewhere, and everything depends upon the quality of those people. If that quality is good, well, India would do well; if it is not good, then she will not do well however cleverly a few people may function, whether in politics or in any other national activity. Ultimately, it is the quality, the character and the abilities of the people that count.

We are a vast country with an enormous population and we are presently, in a few months' time, going to have the elections<sup>3</sup> on a bigger scale than ever attempted anywhere. I believe that there are 175 million voters in the voters' lists. Nobody knows what is going to happen in those elections or after. Nobody can foretell what this vast electorate will decide or may decide. The mere organisation of this election is a terrific job. You can just calculate how many election booths will have to be set up and men put in charge of them to check and conduct elections and how many people will have to be given some training for this purpose. It is a terrific job. What the result may be nobody can tell. I am not, in spite of such stupendous tasks involved, worried about the results. I am not worried because I have a certain faith in my people.

Sometimes what worries me is not any particular difficulty that may come in our way but that our people may grow soft and slack and that is a bad thing. Fortunately, life is pretty hard in India, so they cannot become soft. People must work and we all must desire higher standards in India and work for them but, still, I must confess to you the slight fear that I feel that we may grow too soft. There is a tendency to slacken in India. Because the people tend to think that since we have achieved independence, we for the rest of our lives need do nothing at all except to enjoy the fruits of independence. Although, of

1. Address to the Indian students, London, 9 January 1951. B.B.C. tapes, N.M.M.L.
2. V.K. Krishna Menon.
3. General elections to the House of the People and the Legislative Assemblies of twenty-two States were held throughout India between 25 October 1951 and 21 February 1952. The electorate numbered 174,470,000 of whom over 107,000,000 voted.

course, all those persons who wish to savour of the fruits of independence had done little to bring it but, all the same, that tendency is there. And what is more necessary than anything else in India is hard and intelligent work and that has nothing to do with what policy you may pursue—I mean to say, socialism, communism, capitalism or any 'ism'. They are all based on hard work. You cannot produce by passing a resolution about something; you have to work for producing it. Maybe there are better methods of working. That is a different matter. But work is quite essential and while many people work in India no doubt, I wish they could work harder.

A reference has been made by the High Commissioner to our considering ourselves some kind of a superior class or caste which would not like to do manual labour. I was told in the United States of America last year that some students who had gone there to study agriculture had expressed shock when asked to milk cows. That is so because we are more or less some kind of middle class folk as a rule and also due to the fact that till recently, though not now, not much value was attached to human life in India. Fortunately, human life is no longer cheap in India. The result is that people have to do their odd jobs themselves whether they like it or not. And it is important that we give up this mentality that we have developed because of the cheapness of the human lives in India which made us quite unused to using our own hands. In America even a millionaire knows how to use his hands and does it. He may be the head of a corporation, but he will get under a car and set right the machine. This is a common feature of American life. Between such diverse countries as America and Russia, there is a certain dignity of labour. In India things are changing for the better but still there is that feeling of people considering manual labour as something not worthy or desirable in itself, which is ridiculous and which adds to our troubles. That mentality must change and the mentality of going down under and working with one's own hands should come.

Gandhiji of course in his own way tried to convert the people to this way of thinking and acting and succeeded largely too. But I am sorry to say that in this and many other matters we fail Gandhiji by forgetting what he taught us and move away from his teachings. It is very sad indeed. I do not know of course if India can forget his teachings. I do not think it would be easy to forget them as they are too deeply ingrained in our minds and consciousness to be forgotten. Gandhiji will therefore be remembered for ages and ages to come. Nevertheless, there is a dangerous tendency in us to think that we have done our duty by shouting '*Mahatma Gandhi ki jai*'. I believe that again is a weakness among us, that we tend to bother more for the symbols and worship people instead of practising what they have said. Well, that is not the way things are done.

You know I have come here to London for the Prime Ministers' Conference, and we have been discussing very important issues covering peace and war. It



is quite likely that our discussions will produce some effect towards creating a better climate for peace in the world. But the main factors that work are the vast forces, impersonal and personal forces. Well, we try our best to work on what we consider to be right. And that is the utmost we can do. I refer to this merely in the context of our knowledge of what tremendously difficult and complicated times we are living in. Perhaps in every generation people thought their own times much more complicated and difficult. That may be so. Anyhow this is a complicated and difficult situation and many things are happening which are upsetting the old balance. In our own country much has happened. In the whole of Asia, conditions have changed and are changing very rapidly. The old balances of power are being upset.

Now, in this tremendously changing, dynamic world, we have to be wide awake. We have to be prepared and ready for all emergencies. We have to work hard to make our country not only prepared for everything that might happen, but to go ahead. In the ultimate analysis, the country will go ahead by hard work and by our producing the goods we need, the things we need, thereby becoming self-sufficient generally. All of us know that we should help in that process and make our country a growing concern. Everything that can make a nation grow is present in India but they are in separate bits and pieces and have to be joined together, so that they hold together. When we succeed in doing that then the result would inevitably be satisfactory. But if we do not do that, then it is going to be very dangerous. Ours is a rich country. However, the paradox is that the people are poor, while the country is rich. We have got potential wealth which we can turn into real wealth by our work and by our ability. So if you look upon this job as a tremendous adventure, then it is an adventure, and the service of India today is a tremendous adventure which may not bring to most of you any big rewards in terms of money, but which should bring a greater satisfaction in having done the job well than money or such like things can bring. Well, I think I have spoken enough. *Jai Hind.*

## 2. Facing Life<sup>1</sup>

Mr Vice-Chancellor and friends,

I confess I had not quite realised how very new this University was.<sup>2</sup> It is only just an infant, but it appears to be a very healthy infant, growing very rapidly.

1. Address to the students of Gujarat University, Ahmedabad, 31 January 1951. A.I.R. tapes, N.M.M.L.

2. It was set up in 1950.

Well, I am very happy to visit it for a variety of reasons, and it does give one in this rather dismal world great pleasure to see these centres, not merely of degree-giving but of real learning, growing up and I am sure that even now as it is, and more so in the future, this University is going to bring, if I may say so with all respect, perhaps more credit to Ahmedabad than even its other activities.

Well, there is much that I can speak to you about because, if I may confess it, I feel very much at home before an audience like this. I feel at home in the sense that I do not feel the kind of tensions that exist in other spheres, political and other, which somehow come in the way of our thinking rightly because often we are pulled in various directions by all kinds of factors. But a university at least should be a place where we can think and talk and discuss about matters without these various pulls, so that we can seek the truth as far as we can and try to arrive at some conclusions in regard to the actions that we may have to undertake. It is true that a university is basically academic in character. Nevertheless, it may be academic in the old sense of the word only as it cannot but be more and more in touch with various elements of everyday life.

Well, I would like to think with you or, at any rate, to suggest to you many of the problems that face us. We are too apt to look at them just as they arise. We do not try to go back into the past nor do we look forward into the future, because we, and more especially we, the politicians, are overwhelmed by the troubles of the moment. Obviously, we cannot grasp these problems unless we go back to the roots, at any rate, and see how they grew. All old scriptures of the world, including our *Upanishads* that we have had the honour and the privilege to call our own, show one essential feature, which is that the great thoughts embodied in them have been distilled through mutual discussion and free intercourse between the teacher and the pupil. That is how they arrived at certain fundamental truths. So it is ultimately by this kind of search for truth, that is, by sitting, discussing and enquiring, and by following the method of trial and error that mankind has made progress gradually.

And today, I should say that the real temples are not the so-called temples, mosques or churches but the universities, if these are properly conducted, where you can undertake search of the truth and ultimately lay the foundations both of learning and character and get guidance as to how to shape your future life, because the world becomes more and more complicated, and it is a trite thing to say that we are living in a tremendous age of transition. Well, of course, every age is an age of transition just as every year of your life is an age of transition from one stage to another. Nevertheless, it is true that there are certain stages in one's life which typify changes more than others and perhaps we are living through some such stages, when one lives through times of rapid change.



One must however remember two facts always. If you are too static, if you are always thinking in terms of yesterday, then you somehow get left behind. You have therefore to keep pace with events, not only the events in the physical world, but events in the world of the mind, of the intellect, including psychological changes, and all kinds of other changes taking place in the universe. At the same time, keeping pace with events does not mean that you rush ahead without any firm base and be rootless. So there has to be some balance, some standards to go by and some link with the roots. Otherwise you let yourself be swept by every passing wind. So how do you achieve that balance between maintaining your link with the roots, maintaining your standards whatever they may be, and at the same time not be static, but keep changing with the changing world and adapting yourself?

Well, as I said, every age has been an age of transition. If you might say, the present age may be traced back more especially to the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution, which started in England about 170 years ago. It started there and spread gradually to western Europe, to America, and for a long time the rest of the world was just a source of raw materials and protected markets for the western European world. Well, the Industrial Revolution brought in its wake very big changes all over. Somehow the tempo of the world grew much faster due to such big changes. Among other things, the population of Europe grew tremendously. In the last 150 years it grew more than it had grown in the previous thousand years or more. Now, if we look at the developments in the last 150 or 170 years since the Industrial Revolution, we find the entire world being affected by it. The Industrial Revolution has spread gradually. It has spread in two ways, that is to say that territorially it has spread rather slowly, ultimately reaching Asia and other parts of the world. But it has nevertheless spread rather intensively.

When we talk about the Industrial Revolution, we may also note that probably at least as big a revolution, if not bigger, had taken place in the field of electronics which came much later in the nineteenth century. I am describing these revolutions as bigger or smaller relatively in terms of their affecting the world. And now we are living through extraordinary times, when atomic energy is being produced and there is talk about use of cosmic rays. Several eminent scientists are trying to decipher what is happening a hundred miles above the earth's surface.

Well, the point of my mentioning all this to you is this, that the tempo of these changes and discoveries has become very fast and it is affecting our daily life tremendously, just as the Industrial Revolution affected the daily life tremendously, firstly in certain countries in Europe and America, then later on in the rest of the world. Then came the electronics revolution which changed life still more significantly. Besides, there have been many other minor revolutions which are really bigger, if you examine them closely. They have been far



bigger than what is normally and rather vaguely called revolution in the world by you and me. You may perhaps think of a revolution in terms of fire, sword, and gun or, if you may like, in terms of a peaceful technique as used more recently. Of course, these are also revolutions, but the other major revolutions in human history that I talked about are not perhaps to our minds striking enough, although, they are the biggest events that have taken place. So you see these big changes happening.

Now, one difficulty arises, that while these enormous changes take place, our minds do not adjust themselves to them; individual minds might, but the group and the mass mind does not. And while we live in a new age, our minds continue to function in an age gone by. Where there is this lack of adjustment, or even if there is an attempt to adjust one's mind too much to the changing times, the mind loses its balance and becomes rather neurotic, just hopping about the world without any roots. And we see plenty of such neurotic minds in the world today, with no standards whereby to measure anything.

Now, I should like to give you another line of thought. This Industrial Revolution, developing in various ways and spreading in various countries, had in it certain contradictions. I mean certain developments followed which prevented attainment of an equilibrium. And if it apparently attained a certain equilibrium in the nineteenth century, it was at the expense of other countries which were not industrially developed. While western Europe and America were apparently peaceful and progress in advanced countries was gaining momentum, there lay Asia and Africa which were not industrially developed but which fed Europe and America in some ways with raw materials and took their manufactured goods. Now, I am not talking in political terms, but I am trying to rationally examine these developments. What I am trying to put across to you is that while a certain apparent equilibrium was achieved in the western world, it was not clearly an equilibrium, as when changes took place in the eastern world gradually, it resulted in conflict in the western world following the spread of colonies in Asia and Africa. Half a dozen countries in the West spread rapidly in Asia and Africa. This was the result of the new industrial techniques and other things pushing them out to these areas where they could get raw materials. The race assumed tremendous speed in the eighties of the nineteenth century, when all these industrially developed countries specially went to Africa, a huge continent, with huge areas, and rapidly divided it up. Well, then a little later Germany advanced rather rapidly in the industrial field, and in some ways went ahead of other nations. It found that the world was already more or less cut up and shared and divided by some other Powers, much to her annoyance. One of the results of that was the First World War brought about by a demand for a share in the world's spoils by some of the colonial and imperialist Powers. Well, the First World War resulted in Germany's defeat and other developments. Among those developments was the coming of

the Russian Revolution, another major event in the world's history. It was a big shake-up that followed the First World War with all its consequences. Nevertheless, it did not solve the problem created by the growth of industry as in certain countries the industrial growth had gone so far ahead of other countries that we saw a period of considerable imbalance between the two wars. This brought about the Second World War.

Well, it is pretty obvious that the Second World War also did not produce conditions of proper balance. It created more difficulties and more problems, among the reasons being that many countries in Asia, like India and other countries, are themselves developing, that is, the Industrial Revolution is taking place in these countries. It had been delayed long enough. The fact that Ahmedabad has a large number of mills does not mean that the Industrial Revolution came to this country a long time ago. Textile mills and such like things are very minor aspects of industry; though, no doubt, very important aspects, yet relatively minor aspects. So the Industrial Revolution, as it has gradually crept into India in the last fifty to seventy years, however slowly, tends to gather momentum. The same applies to other countries. So that the balance that existed in the western world in regard to the growth of industrialism, when there was a large agricultural area to feed upon and supply its goods to, was hardly maintained as every country became or tried to become more or less self-sufficient. So there are inherent contradictions and conflicts which do not easily get settled, and all kinds of propositions are put forward as to how to settle them. I cannot, obviously, in the time available, argue on these matters, but I am expressing these ideas for you to think about them because the politicians, in their political talks, tend to be so superficial that while they talk about immediate problems with great profundity, they hardly care to understand what lies behind those problems or what had preceded them. It is therefore not easy for them to look at these problems in proper perspective.

Now, again I put to you that this Industrial Revolution growing in the last one hundred and fifty years or so has reached, in a sense, its peak of development in two countries. And, oddly enough, these countries are the United States of America and the Soviet Union, which apparently are very unfriendly to each other at the present moment; yet they both are essentially the children of the Industrial Revolution. The United States, of course, is the high watermark of technical development at this time. Its achievement and its production are colossal. It is amazing how much wealth it can produce out of this machine age and how it goes on advancing. The other, the Soviet Union, is nowhere near it in regard to technical achievement. It is growing rapidly and no doubt it will grow. But it is very far behind in technical achievement though it has advanced. It is a genuinely legitimate child of the Industrial Revolution branching off in a separate direction. Now, nobody can say precisely and definitely which of these, in future, that is, what particular social or economic system would be



to the advantage of the world at large. Generally, there are now mixed systems, because we need not talk in terms of extremes. One does not know, but here is a development in the United States, the capitalist development of the highest form at present conceived. On the other side, there is an attempt to build up a communist society. I say attempt, because it is very far from communist, judging it by their own theory. Now, I look at the United States. Here is a highly capitalistic society, tremendously individualistic and all that; and yet, do you know that a very, very high percentage of persons in the United States are employed by the State today? It is a tremendous percentage. I forget exactly what percentage it is, but I was amazed to learn it. But when I say State I mean any employment whether it is in their Federal Government, the State Government, municipal government and whatever pertains to that, and the percentage in the last ten or fifteen years has been rising more and more and the State is spreading out more and more. So here you find a curious development of a highly capitalised, individualistic society, in which the State gradually covers more and more ground and which although, in theory, denies interference by the State, still, in practice it is interfering more and more. So we find all these overlapping developments taking place in the wide world.

At the same time, there is another very curious and a very disturbing development. That is, that while these enormous changes are taking place, human beings somehow are not able to adjust themselves adequately to them. As a result, you find in the highly industrialised countries, more especially, the rate of neurosis going up quite fast. But leave aside the problem of neurosis. The fact is that many of our problems, whether they are domestic problems, social or national problems, are caused by maladjustments. After all, you can describe almost all human problems perhaps in a sentence or two, that is, the relations between the individuals, the relations of the individual with the group, the family and the society and the relations between the groups *inter se*. I think all relations, whether national, international or individual, including relations within home, are essentially part of the human problem. So these problems of maladjustment arise at every stage because our minds are not properly attuned as they ought to be.

Now, if one goes back to ancient times—it is very difficult to go back, to put oneself in the atmosphere of that time, one cannot do it really; but if one tries to do it, whether you go back to ancient India or to ancient Greece, what feeling does one get? Well, I will tell you how I feel about it. I have no doubt that just glorifying the ancient times is to delude oneself. Similarly, to deny the existence of poverty and to think that everything was alright in those days, is also a delusion. Nevertheless, I have a sensation of a more integrated living though not very satisfactory in material terms, but a more balanced life, humanly speaking, or, if I may put it so, the individual then was a better integrated individual than he is today. I have read old Greek literature, the old Indian



literature, including Sanskrit plays, and I gather the impression of a certain equilibrium in life, a sense of integration in the individual, not in every individual obviously but, generally speaking, that sense of integration existed, maybe not of a uniformly high degree. I am not talking about the high-level individual. I am talking about the average. Today, what seems to be completely lacking is that sense of integration. In spite of the tremendous progress the world has made in the industrial and scientific spheres, the individual has become more and more unbalanced and is lacking in equilibrium. Why is that so? And it is that lack of balance ultimately that is producing these tremendous problems all around, including the international problems where we find increasing tendencies to war and preparation for war.

There is a good deal of talk of war today. The conflict in East Asia instead of resolving itself appears to be moving towards war. Behind that are many causes but, at the present moment, I am prepared to say that the basic cause is just fear and anger, fear of each other, show of passion and anger at each other, a desire for revenge. Now, all these feelings are, in the ultimate analysis, not the feelings of an educated individual or a community which has a balanced outlook. They show lack of balance. If a nation becomes passionately angry then it is unbalanced. A nation in fear is unbalanced. Fear is possibly the greatest unbalancing factor which upsets everything. We all have this in the world today.

So it is rather a curious phenomenon, that while the world develops and makes scientific progress very rapidly and is trying to conquer other worlds, that is, trying to comprehend the mysteries of the universe, and we talk about the expanding frontiers of the universe and knowledge of its nature presuming to know more about it than people ever dreamt of in the olden days, yet we seem to know and control ourselves less and less. It is an extraordinary phenomenon which has been responsible for such great problems we have to reckon with.

I have ventured to put before you a number of ideas so that you may think about them, discuss them among yourselves, and thereafter try to know something more about them as that would prevent your becoming static individuals and help you mould your life properly. Great responsibilities are inevitably going to fall on you as upon every young man and young woman in India as most of us of the older generation have more or less had our day. We may carry on for a short time more, but it does not make much difference as others will have to shoulder the burden. We have far too many people in the country and I am not enamoured of these increasing numbers. I am not at all proud of the numbers as ultimately a nation is made by the quality of its people. Its greatness is judged by the character of its people, their learning, their ability and competence. If a nation does not have men with such qualities then no amount of jugglery will make it great. Ultimately it is the quality of its people that counts and if

the universities and other places of learning impart such quality, then it will be good for India, and if not, then it will not be good for her.

Therefore, whatever we may say and whatever resolutions we may pass, it is up to you to consider these basic questions and then evolve a process, a set-up that conduces towards making a qualitative change in your lives. I do not know how such a development can take place by which the nation is endowed with men of quality. But whether such a development takes place or not, there is something more important and that is the spirit of fearlessness and facing life's problems boldly because I do think that there is no greater gift that an individual or a nation can have than to be fearless. Everything else is secondary. It was the spirit of fearlessness which Gandhiji infused in us, for we were small men as we are a small people even now. But he put into us some little magical element for a while, and we performed big deeds even though we were small. An individual or a nation which is always afraid of taking risks and is always fearful of consequences of whatever it may do may save itself from some minor dangers but it gets overwhelmed by the greater dangers. We have challenged life and challenged destiny and we have now fresh challenges to meet. *Jai Hind*.<sup>3</sup>

3. At the end of the meeting the national anthem was sung by a girl while the audience stood to attention. After the anthem was over, Nehru said: "In schools and colleges at least we should practise singing the national anthem in chorus. In other countries this is so. In Indonesia, sometimes fifty-thousand persons together sing the national anthem."

### 3. Students and the Future of India<sup>1</sup>

I do not mind what you call me. As a matter of fact the announcement in the papers that I do not want to be called 'Pandit'<sup>2</sup> was made by an enthusiastic secretary. I am confiding this to you, do not tell it to others. Prefixes and suffixes are not of much significance but they psychologically influence the man with whose name they are attached. I, however, want that everybody should be addressed by one and the same prefix.

I wish to discuss all the important problems with the students, but unfortunately I have very little time. The main problem for every one is the

1. Address to the students of Lucknow University, 17 February 1951. From the *National Herald* and *The Hindustan Times*, 18 February 1951.
2. Earlier the President of the University Students' Union had said that students loved to call him Pandit Nehru since the prefix Pandit evoked memories of his being a great leader of the nationalist movement and it should not therefore be removed.



future of the country. The burden of the future will fall on the coming generation, and the future depends on the quality of the people that constitute the nation and on the quality of those who are at the helm of the affairs of the country. The country will be what they will make it. It all depends on the qualities—moral, spiritual, and intellectual—of the people, not their number. These days everybody talks of democracy but democracy does not mean counting the heads of fools. I do not wish to sermonise to you. Instead, I want the young men to think for themselves and ponder over what is happening in the world and their own country and try to understand the situation instead of being swept away by sentiments and catch phrases.

Society is like the current of a river. Society and the world are continually passing from one stage to another. History is the story of this transition. Like a river, society passes through rapid transitory periods sometimes. The present epoch is one of the major periods of transition. This period began about thirty years ago with the beginning of the First World War and is still continuing, and probably the younger generation would have to pass their life during this period. It is, therefore, necessary that the young men should understand the problems. They should not debate on the 'isms', because socialism, communism, or any other ideology are only phases of problems facing them. I want the young men to see world events in the broad sweep of history.

About two hundred years ago the Industrial Revolution began in England and slowly it began to spread. Now it has reached India. The Industrial Revolution was the greatest of the revolutions of the world, because it unsettled the structure of the old society, and different revolutions in different countries were but a reflection of this great revolution. As the Industrial Revolution first took place in England, that country came to the forefront, and in search of raw materials conquered colonies. Countries like Germany, where the Industrial Revolution came after England, and other countries later tried to win colonies for themselves. In the eighties of the nineteenth century there was a race for the conquest of Africa for raw materials. The First World War was fought for the same end. When the Germans said that they wanted a place under the sun, what they meant was that they wanted colonies to get raw materials for their industries. Then came the Second World War and a number of revolutions in its wake.

As a result of these changes the basis of rural economy was uprooted and the old balance was upset. There were political changes. China has woken up in East Asia and upset the balance of power. Some people do not like it. But this is an accomplished fact. Scientific discovery and development are very rapid during this period and there are great developments in the methods of production. Industries have begun to produce huge amount of wealth, as in the U.S.A.

The Soviet Union and the U.S.A. are the two countries with great scientific resources. But there is no love lost between the two. Both are direct descendants



of the Industrial Revolution. There is a great difference between the two, but there is some similarity also between them. The two countries represent the two phases of industrial development.

In these days of scientific production enough can be produced for every individual in the world. But, at the same time, scientific development has taken place on another line too—the line of destruction. The atom bomb is the symbol of the destructive capacity of science.

The biggest problem facing the country at present is the economic problem. Events are taking the world towards socialism. But when people say that we should immediately start on nationalisation, they do not suggest how to do it. I do not want that the productive means of the country should break down due to hasty action. India is a backward country insofar as methods of production are concerned. This is an important problem to be solved. At the same time, I want the system of distribution to be such that every person gets his share. I would advise students to think more in these terms and not merely in terms of socialism and communism which only cause excitement.

There are people in our country who claim that though they are backward materially, they are very much advanced spiritually. But I do not see any spiritual advancement either. Specially those who talk about spiritual advancement are devoid of it. We do not even know the art of living. We think that to be shabby and ill-kept is to be a *sanyasi*.<sup>3</sup>

Though the country has got rid of political slavery, its mind is still entangled in the chains of old traditions. Much noise is being created about the Hindu Code Bill. I do not care whether it is adopted or not, but its opponents have become symbols of conservative reaction and I am convinced that so long as this reaction is not completely destroyed the country can make no progress. I would therefore advise young men not to tie themselves with the past. The progress and development of ideas is a continuous process and not a static phenomenon.

Great events are taking place in the world. There is a war going on in Korea. The people of the country have to think as to what they have to do. But we mostly think about what our neighbours should do. We have a great capacity to tender advice to others, but think little of our own duties.

Unfortunately, these days everybody thinks in terms of getting elected to a legislature and becoming a minister. But to be a minister is not something to be proud of, as a Chinese poet has written. There was a poet who had several children, one among whom was a dunce. This one he decided would become a minister. I would, therefore, like young men to train their minds to think as future responsibilities will fall on their shoulders.

3. An ascetic.

## FUNCTIONING OF DEMOCRACY

## I. General





## 1. Reply to the President's Address<sup>1</sup>

I am reluctant to intervene and take up the time of the House when, as has been pointed out, honourable Members do not have so much of time to give expression to their views. I am not going to address myself to the various subjects that have been raised, but rather put before the House for its consideration certain aspects of this discussion.

It has been said repeatedly that various matters have not been mentioned in the President's address,<sup>2</sup> or have been inadequately mentioned. I submit that the President's address is not a survey of all the problems of India, important or unimportant. The President's address, if I may say so, is not modelled after the address of the President of the United States of America. It is supposed to be a brief statement indicating the general relations of India with the world, and the work we have to do. It cannot, in the very nature of things, therefore, take into consideration all these various matters that are raised, which are important no doubt. It is, generally speaking, not a controversial document, except for the fact that Government's policy may be controversial. It is a brief document, certainly not a comprehensive document. I would beg the House to remember that. It is undoubtedly a statement of Government's policy. It is, in fact, the Government's address although the President delivers it. Some honourable Members imagine that it is a private address of the President. It is nothing of the kind. It is a brief statement, as far as possible made in a non-controversial spirit, of the broad lines of Government's policy. Therefore, much of the criticism is rather beside the point, although the points raised may be important.

One of the points that is important certainly was mentioned by my honourable friend who just spoke; that is about Kashmir.<sup>3</sup> If I may say so, important as the Kashmir issue is, there is nothing that the President could have said about it. Much has been said about it and, as the House knows, the issue is, at the present moment, before the Security Council of the United Nations and it is a little difficult for the President, or even for Government, to say much about it at this particular stage. I have said a good deal about it elsewhere and in this House on several occasions. When the occasion arises, I would inevitably come to this House and inform it of any new development.

1. 15 November 1950. *Parliamentary Debates, Official Report*, 1950, Vol. VI, Part II, cols 81-85.

2. President Rajendra Prasad delivered his address to Parliament on 14 November.

3. Syama Prasad Mookerjee expressed surprise at the omission of any reference in the address to Kashmir and sought a declaration of the Government's policy in this regard.

One or two other matters have been referred to. About the elections,<sup>4</sup> may I assure my honourable friend and the House that, insofar as this Government is concerned, we have taken every step that we can and we will take every step to ensure that the elections are absolutely free and fair, and that every group and party has the fullest and equal opportunities. We have impressed this upon the Election Commission and I believe the Election Commission itself has taken great care to see that it is functioning in that way and that it will continue to do so. About some incident that happened in Banaras,<sup>5</sup> I know nothing about it. The provincial Government or the local authorities may have had some special reasons on special occasions. It has nothing to do with the elections. Elections are pretty far off.

He mentioned also something about rehabilitation and the refugee situation. I am perfectly prepared to agree with him that the situation of the displaced persons is very far from desirable. He mentioned some cases of deplorable and sad happenings.<sup>6</sup> Undoubtedly that is so. It is no good denying that. But we have to view the situation as a whole and decide what we can do about it. Accepting the criticism of my honourable friend, I would, nevertheless, submit two or three broad generalisations for the consideration of this House. We have had to face this refugee problem of a magnitude which I doubt if any other country in the world has had to face. I submit—for the moment I am talking about the refugees from Western Pakistan—that the results that we have achieved are creditable to Government. I submit that compared to the way in which the refugee problem has been dealt with in any country, our results have been creditable. I do not say that they are satisfactory; that is a different thing entirely. I say that they compare well. There have been refugee problems and there are refugee problems today in many countries in the world, Germany, Japan and many countries of Europe, after the War, and even before the War. Refugees from the last War are still continuing in camps in many countries in Europe. That is point number one.

The second point is in regard to Eastern Pakistan, West Bengal and Assam. Again, the situation is not at all satisfactory, I admit completely. Nevertheless, I would submit to this House that it is rather extraordinary that large numbers of migrants are returning to their homes. No doubt, if you provide them with far better conditions, they will not return. No doubt, if you provide employment to the unemployed persons, they would choose to remain here. But the point is, under stress of circumstances, large numbers of Hindus from East Pakistan

4. Referring to Government's decision to hold the general elections in November-December 1951, Syama Prasad Mookerjee wanted all parties to be assured of free and fair elections without interference from the Government in their election work.

5. Mookerjee alleged that while permission had been given to hold meetings in Varanasi, the use of loudspeakers had not been allowed.

6. Mookerjee cited a few cases of suicide by some displaced persons from East Bengal.



and large numbers of Muslims from West Bengal and Assam left their homes through fear, apprehension, whatever it was. At that time, nothing else counted except immediate fear. I can assure you that something has happened to make them go back. They have, on the whole, preferred to go back to remaining here, and the number of people who have gone back, both Hindus and Muslims, is really astonishing. Even in my most optimistic moments I did not expect this big flow-back which is happening for the last six weeks or so. That surely does not mean that conditions are satisfactory and that they have no difficulty to contend against. All that is true. But, nevertheless, it does show that there is an improvement in those conditions. Every other information that we have got also tends to show that there is a definite improvement, whether it is in the number of dacoities or insecurity of life. Much of what my honourable friend has said is true; I am not denying that. But I say these things flow from a large number of factors, including, basically and fundamentally, certain conflicts that exist between India and Pakistan. Not that it is so only here; it is so all over the country. Which raises big issues into which I am not going at present. I do submit that the situation in Eastern Pakistan, West Bengal, etc., is far better from the point of view of the migrants and displaced persons than it has been in the last six months or so.

My honourable friend referred to the question of citizenship.<sup>7</sup> There is no doubt, of course, that people who have come to India, those displaced persons who stay in India, are bound to have citizenship. If the law is inadequate, the law should be changed. The real point that arises is more in connection with the elections, and the date to be fixed. Now, this House once changed the date for the preparation of the electoral rolls, during the last session, I believe, with the result that almost all the work that had been done was not entirely wasted, but largely so. It upset the work entirely, because we had been working up to a certain date; we had to start afresh and do all that again. If you go about changing these dates, it means enormous labour, enormous expense and fresh delays. Therefore, this changing of dates has to be carefully considered. The number that my honourable friend gave, I do not think, is accurate. He indicated that fifty lakhs of people have been disfranchised. I do not think any such number has been disfranchised, because, from any calculation, a very large portion of this fifty lakhs came before that date. Another difficulty arises at the present moment. Quite a considerable number of people are going back daily. On the average, the surplus going back may be as much as 2,000 a day or 1,500 a day. The situation is, therefore, a fluid one. One is not quite sure as to who will go back and who will not go back. Therefore, it is a little

7. Mookerjee demanded rights of citizenship and voting for refugees who had come away from Pakistan after 25 July 1949. This date had been fixed as the cut-off date for enrolment of migrants in the electoral rolls.



difficult to lay down hard and fast rules at the present moment. It may become better a little later. My point is that all those who stay are bound to have full rights of citizenship even if it requires a change in the law.

Secondly, in regard to the elections, it is not easy to change the date again and again. it is not a question of the displaced persons only. A far greater number than the refugees will attain majority if you add a few months. Persons who were twenty may attain the age of twenty-one and you will say that so many have been disfranchised. The whole thing is upset. This is bound to happen. You cannot have absolutely accurate rules that the moment one becomes twenty-one, he votes.

One thing more. A lot has been said about Government's treatment or the lack of interest in regard to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.<sup>8</sup> Well, I do not think it would be quite correct to say that it is due to lack of interest. But it is true to say again that much that ought to be done has not been done and is not done because, ultimately, of lack of resources and other difficulties. We can appoint a Commission if you like. It is easy enough to appoint a Commission. But, as the House knows, the appointment of a Commission is a way out sometimes out of a difficulty, for it makes people think that we are doing something though we really do not do much. But deliberately we do not want to delude the public when we do not have the wherewithal to do much good. But I may inform the House that so far as the appointment of the Special Officer—I don't know what it is called in the Constitution—the Special Officer for the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes, the President has decided upon such an appointment and if it has not already been announced, it will be announced very soon.

8. Jaipal Singh complained that the Government was deliberately flouting and frustrating some Articles of the Constitution relating to the Scheduled Castes and Tribes. Punjabrao Deshmukh criticized the Government for delaying the appointment of a commission for the backward classes as provided for in the Constitution.

## 2. To G.V. Mavalankar<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

December 13, 1950

My dear Mr Speaker,

Our Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Shri Satya Narayan Sinha, has sent me your letter of the 25th November, addressed to him. In this letter you have

1. File No. 48(46)/50-PMS.
2. Mavalankar expressed concern at the large number of ordinances issued during the year, some of which, he felt, were not justified.

referred to the ordinances which have been issued in the course of 1950. Although you have been good enough to say that this letter was written by you not in your official capacity, but in your private capacity, nevertheless, it raises an important issue and I am taking the liberty to circulate copies of that letter among members of the Cabinet.

I think all my colleagues will agree with you that the issue of ordinances is normally not desirable and should be avoided except on special and urgent occasions. As to when such an occasion may or may not arise, is a matter for judgment. We are living today in rather extraordinary times both from the national and the international points of view, and the situation changes from day to day. Action has sometimes to be taken in the economic field or in regard to matters concerning law and order and delay might have harmful results.

The chief difficulty that I feel, however, is of another kind. Every country has now to face a multitude of problems, political, social, economic, etc., and a great deal of legislation is necessary. Not only the Government of a State, but private Members of Parliament are continually urging that new legislation should be passed. Parliamentary procedure is meant to give the fullest opportunities for consideration and debate and to check errors and mistakes creeping in. That is obviously desirable. But all this involves considerable delay. The result is that important legislation is hung up. Every Parliament in the world has to face this difficult problem and various proposals have been made to overcome it. Generally speaking, the objective aimed at is for a Parliament to lay down the broad principles of legislation and for the details to be worked out in committees which may even have powers to finalise them. Sometimes Parliament approves of the principle and empowers a department of Government to fill in the details. A famous instance of this was when England, which had been a free trade country for a hundred years, turned to protection. Having accepted the principle, it left the working out of the details to the Board of Trade. That tendency grows because there is no other way out, and yet that does cut through the normal parliamentary process.

In fact this great delay in meeting urgent situations is supposed to be one of the serious drawbacks of democracy in a changing age. I do not know what remedy can be found for it.

It is obviously necessary for important matters to be debated in full. Unfortunately, however, a great deal of time of Parliament is often spent in discussing matters of little or no importance, with the result that less time is left for more important pieces of legislation or they are simply delayed. This might be got over by better organisation and planning, but we have seen repeatedly that the best of planning breaks down, as it can only succeed with the full cooperation of large numbers of Members of Parliament. Even in this session our programme has been upset by the fact that what we considered simple and



uncontroversial legislation took a great deal of time of the House. I do now know how we are going to get through even the important legislation which we had put forward during this session.

I have no remedy to suggest, but I shall be grateful if, from your great experience, you could advise Government as to how they should proceed about this matter.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### 3. To N.G. Ranga<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 16, 1951

My dear Ranga,

I have been amazed to see in this morning's papers the report that forty-three MPs, including you, have sent cables to "the Presiding Officers of the U.S. Congress" about the proposed gift of two million tons of foodgrains to India.<sup>2</sup> No mention of this was made either to me or, to my knowledge, to any member of the Cabinet or to the Chief Whip, and the first intimation we get is in today's newspapers. The matter was mentioned in the Cabinet today, and the Cabinet felt that grave impropriety has been committed in addressing in this way the officers of a foreign Government.

Apart from this impropriety, the text of the message itself with its references to various matters, including the Marshall Aid programme of help and to our general policy, appears to me to be most inappropriate and embarrassing to our Government and to the policy we are pursuing.<sup>3</sup>

You will, no doubt, realise that if this practice of sending messages of this kind by MPs continues, a group of MPs may well send a message of a different type expressing views entirely different from yours. Thus, our Members of Parliament and members of our Party will be addressing foreign Governments in regard to foreign policy and speaking in entirely different voices.

1. File No. 32(195)/49-PMS.
2. N.G. Ranga, M.R. Masani, Frank Anthony and other MPs informed the U.S. Congress that the gift of foodgrains to India would "strengthen the friendship and understanding between our two countries."
3. The message also said that the liberty and integrity of the free Asian countries was menaced by "communist expansionism" and appreciated "the great efforts for the welfare of the free world embodied in Marshall Aid and the Point Four Programme."



This matter will have to be considered by the Party and I may have to mention it in Parliament itself. It is a serious matter.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

#### 4. Need for Healthy Conventions<sup>1</sup>

... There is another, and a different, matter to which, with your permission, I should like to make some reference. I should like to express my appreciation of most of our newspapers for the fair manner in which they discharge their duties to the public. As is well known, we have the fullest freedom of the press and it is open to any newspaper to criticise Government in any way it likes, subject only to the laws of the land. We have no official press and no Government-owned or controlled newspapers. While expressing my appreciation of newspapers in general, may I also say that some periodicals in various parts of India fall very greatly below any standard of decency and legitimate criticism. Indeed, it has amazed me to find to what depths these periodicals can fall and how they can go on giving publicity to an amalgam of falsehood and indecency. Constant references are made to alleged conflicts and intrigues in the Cabinet and in Government and it is insinuated that some of my honoured colleagues in the Cabinet do not cooperate with others. I have ignored these writings of irresponsible journalists, but I feel that it is due to my colleagues and to this House that I should say something about this false and malicious campaign, which relates not only to the Central Government but also to some provincial Governments. In particular, some weekly periodicals are guilty of this behaviour.

I should like to state categorically that these stories are completely false and the Cabinet and Government function with probably a far greater measure of friendly cooperation than any other Government in any other country. What I am especially concerned about is the degradation of some part of our press. This is a serious matter for those connected with the honourable and responsible profession of journalism, which has such a vitally important part to play in the life of the country, more especially a country which is governed by democratic ideals and objectives. It is for the leaders of the newspaper world in India to

1. Statement in Parliament, 16 February 1951. *Parliamentary Debates, Official Report*, 1951, Vol. VIII, Part II, cols 2986–2988. Extracts.

consider this matter with all seriousness with a view to prevent this degradation which cannot but affect the whole public life of our country.

There is yet a third, and a different matter to which I should like, Sir, to make reference. In this morning's newspapers I saw, for the first time, a report that forty-three Members of Parliament have sent a cable to the presiding officers of the United States Congress in regard to the legislation that is pending before that Congress for supplying foodgrains to India. This message was sent without any kind of reference to any member of Government and I was considerably surprised to read it. It is open to Members of Parliament, of course, to address any message they like to any individual or any Government. But, it does appear to me a novel precedent for a number of Members to take a step in a matter concerning foreign policy and in addressing the officers of a foreign Government without consideration of the larger issues. If this practice continues, different Members of Parliament may send contradictory messages and advocate different policies by telegrams addressed to foreign countries. The House will realise how embarrassing that must be not only for Government but for this House. In this House there is perfect freedom for Members to express their views. For Members of the House to send direct messages to foreign Governments is a practice which, I submit, is to be deprecated and which can only lead to confusion and embarrassment.

**FUNCTIONING OF DEMOCRACY****II. The Electoral Process**





## 1. Need for Free and Fair Elections<sup>1</sup>

The general elections must be completed before May 1951. Representations from some quarters about difficulties in the way of holding the elections in summer or during the harvest season have been made. I am of the opinion that, in view of the fact that you may be called upon to hold the general elections on future occasions within six weeks from any point of time, climatic conditions and vagaries should not be allowed to delay them. In my opinion, the holding of the general elections early is desirable if only to put an end to uncertainties and doubts. The present Governments cannot continue to act as care-taker Governments for an indefinite period.

The greatest stress should be laid on the objective that the election should be conducted in such a way that there may be the least objection or complaint about any influence or pressure having been exercised on the electors or others by anybody. If the elections are not free and fair the basis of our whole constitutional structure will be made weak and the very roots of our Constitution will be affected.

This is particularly true so far as the first general elections, which are going to colour our future life, are concerned. It is, therefore, highly important that all officers carrying out general election duties, as also the Government concerned, should take every possible step so that the elections are really fair and free.

The fact that about 180 million voters will be going to the polls at the next general elections is something unique in history and the mere fact of our accomplishing it competently and impartially will give the country a tremendous strength and prestige.

Reports of refusal of women to give their names in some places for inclusion on the electoral rolls have come to my notice. The vote is meant for the individual and not for the wife of so and so. If women, therefore, decline to give their names, they will have to be kept out of the voters' lists.

1. Address to the chief electoral officers, New Delhi, 31 October 1950. From the *National Herald*, 1 November 1950.

## 2. To Jayaprakash Narayan<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

November 1, 1950

My dear Jayaprakash,

Thank you for your letter of October 28th.<sup>2</sup> The matter has not been finally decided yet, but a good deal of thought has been given to it. Because you mentioned it to me, I have also thought about it and discussed it.

May I say right at the outset that I am a firm believer in a strong opposition. I do not think good work is done in Parliament or elsewhere without adequate criticism.

But I do not see how your proposal makes any great difference to this. I could understand a complete system of proportional representation by a single transferable vote and plural constituencies. That is physically impossible as it is very intricate. We could not possibly do it even if we wanted to. Please keep in mind the tremendous difficulties of organising an election where about 160-180 million voters are concerned. It is a colossal task. If we introduced P.R. that would make it absolutely impossible, both from the organisational point of view and that of the voter who will not understand its intricacies.

Countries that have had proposed P.R. have usually had unstable governments and hence there has been a great repulsion against it. I know you are not advocating P.R. but anyhow I am mentioning it.

The simplest way of dealing with this or any election is to have single-member constituencies. That was our original idea and that appears to be more or less the intention still. The only difficulty that comes in is in regard to the Scheduled Castes and Tribes and for that purpose it becomes necessary to have some two-member constituencies. This will affect a number of seats but far the greater number will remain single-member. This arrangement was not thought of in connection with what might be called political minorities.

Three-member constituencies were considered by us and the difficulties in their way were prodigious, the area and the number of voters involved.

If this approach is agreed to, then the question of cumulative voting would only apply to the Scheduled Castes seats. It might have some advantage but, on the whole, I think the disadvantages would outweigh these advantages. It

1. File No. 16(49)/50-PMS.

2. Referring to the reported move of the Government to create a certain number of constituencies with the distributive system of voting, Jayaprakash argued that such a system would be inimical to democracy as it would "arithmetically multiply the strength of the majority party to the utter exclusion of all minorities." He added that a conference of opposition parties convened by him had favoured three-member constituencies with cumulative vote as a first choice and single-member constituencies as the second.



would tend to keep up in some way the separation of the Scheduled Castes which we wish to avoid as far as possible.

I do not know why you should be apprehensive of single-member constituencies plus some double-member. The election is on such a vast scale with thousands of constituencies that no one can predict the result. What we are up against are the failures of democracy when we enter into these large regions. Democracy originally was thought of in smaller terms and was presumably effective. I just do not know what our elections will lead us or the country to, but the simpler they are the better.

You seem to think that elections are decided by arithmetic means or by some mathematical conclusions. Surely this does not happen, when there are numerous candidates pulling in different directions. As a matter of fact it will be difficult for any party even to find all these candidates.<sup>3</sup>

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal

3. In his reply on 10 November, Jayaprakash maintained that "the device of the distributive vote" only had an arithmetical result, unvitiated by the number of candidates and the different pulls that there might be. He thought that irrespective of the vastness of the problem, the rearing of democracy in the country required all care. "If the tragic failures of the Congress governments in the past years have shown anything, it is the danger of a compromise with principles."

### 3. Double-Member Constituencies<sup>1</sup>

Please inform the Election Commissioner that:

1. I am entirely opposed to any two-member constituencies, except where a seat is reserved for the Scheduled Castes or Tribes. I think this will be contrary to the Cabinet's decision and, in any event, is undesirable. The U.P. Government should be so informed.<sup>2</sup>

2. I am inclined to agree with the Election Commissioner's suggestion that there might occasionally be one reserved seat for the Scheduled Tribes in a single-member constituency.

3. The question of cumulative or distributive voting will have to be decided finally by Parliament. I do not agree with Shri Jayaprakash Narayan's contention.

1. Note to the Principal Private Secretary, 18 November 1950. File No. 16(49)/50-PMS.
2. The U.P. Government tentatively proposed to create 143 two-member constituencies for the State Legislative Assembly consisting of 430 seats. While each of 90 such constituencies was to have a seat reserved for the Scheduled Castes, the other 53 constituencies were unreserved and intended to facilitate the return of some Muslims, if possible.

#### 4. To Syama Prasad Mookerjee<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 1, 1950

My dear Syama Prasad,

Thank you for your letter of the 30th November.

I do not think there will be any difficulty about the granting of citizenship rights to those migrants from Pakistan who stay on in India.

The question of giving voting rights is, however, full of difficulty.<sup>2</sup> It involves to some extent a supercession of our Constitution. You yourself suggest that the 31st December 1950 might be fixed as limiting period for residence. As a matter of fact you would prefer that no date be fixed at all. All this will bring many complications in its train. But, even apart from this, it is clear that if we change dates now, this will upset completely our whole scheme of elections. The Election Commissioner has given thought to it and feels that it might even become difficult for us to hold elections in November-December next, if we change these dates now. Dr Ambedkar is of the same opinion. It has been bad enough for us to extend the date of elections from May-June to November-December 1951. To take any risks about the new date would be an error of the first magnitude.

Far the greater number of migrants or refugees from East Bengal will of course be included and in fact have been included in the electoral rolls. The new question relates only to such persons as have come more or less recently. These people have been moving about very much and a large number of them have gone back to Pakistan. More are going back from day to day. Therefore their position is exceedingly fluid and it is very difficult to say who is a permanent resident of India and who is a temporary sojourner.

As it is, a very large number of people, who attain the age of 21 after the date fixed for the enrolment, will not be voters at the time of the election. This kind of thing is bound to happen always. There does not seem to be any particular reason for complaint on the part of some refugees who have come here in recent months,

I have given a good deal of thought to this matter and I just do not see how we can bring these people in without upsetting all our work and even making the date of our elections rather doubtful.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. File No. 16(54)/50-PMS.

2. Mookerjee wanted all refugees who had migrated to India after 25 July 1949 to be eligible for voting rights in the general elections.



## 5. To Arun Chandra Guha<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 14, 1950

My dear Guha,<sup>2</sup>

You gave me a representation signed by a number of Members of Parliament some days ago. In this it was suggested that voting rights might be extended to displaced persons coming to India beyond the date thus far fixed.

We have gone into this matter fairly carefully and considered it in Cabinet. We find that it is exceedingly difficult to make such a change at this stage. It would seriously affect our whole election procedure and might even come in the way of the election dates which we have fixed. It would involve first of all the immediate passing of a citizenship act and then the acceptance of people on their own demand without any scrutiny. It is not possible to have a complicated system of scrutiny. This is undesirable and is bound to be abused. If we made any change in Bengal, it would naturally apply to people in other parts of India also. The number involved in other parts of India is not much but the same procedure would have to be adopted, involving enormous labour everywhere and upsetting all our plans.

The result is that we came to the conclusion that this was not practicable.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. File No. 16(54)/50-PMS.

2. A Member of Parliament at this time.

## 6. Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill<sup>1</sup>

I really have nothing much to say and I do not want to take up the time of the House now, but some honourable Members are evidently full of the suspicion

1. Statement in Parliament, 22 December 1950. *Parliamentary Debates, Official Report*, 1950, Vol. VII, Part II, cols 2281–2282. The Bill to regulate the election of representatives of Part C States (Centrally administered areas) to the Upper Chamber of Parliament was adopted by the House on 22 December 1950.



about Government's attitude in regard to some of these States and they wish me to say something which might possibly, in some degree, lessen their suspicions.

First of all, there is, I take it, nobody in this House who does not desire that these States or any part of India should be put on level, insofar as it is possible, with other States in regard to self-governing institutions and the sooner it is done the better. We propose to consider each case separately and as soon as possible to give effect to this policy. But there are obvious difficulties—I am sure the House will realise—in grouping all these States together. Although they are all Part C States, really each one stands on a different footing and is completely different from many points of view.

For instance, the States of Manipur and Tripura are different, not from the point of being forward or backward—I do not attach much importance to any such classification in regard to any part of India—but they are important from the point of view of being on our border and frontier and also because, unfortunately, they have not been developed in regard to communications and other things which are essential from our point of view. Therefore, one has to take them into consideration separately.

Then, there are cases like that of Ajmer or Coorg which, from no point of view, are, if I may say so, backward in regard to anything compared to any other province or State. The problems there are not of backwardness, but rather of geographical size and other things which have to be taken into consideration. Coorg has a Legislative Assembly. It is possible to have some such thing elsewhere too. Anyhow, it does require careful adjustment.

Then there are the cases of Vindhya Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh—fairly large areas which, normally speaking, should be treated as large areas are treated.

Finally, there is the case of Delhi which stands by itself, chiefly because it has both the honour and the disability of housing or having the Capital here. It has an honour and it has a privilege, but privileges also carry disabilities and obligations and one cannot easily forget them.

So all these matters have to be considered separately. But I wish to assure the House that it goes against the grain for us in Government to have these large and populous areas being treated in a very special way and being deprived, if I may say so, of the normal ways of carrying on their Government themselves. We want to remedy that as soon as possible and to the best extent possible. It is Government's intention to go into this question very soon. We shall first go into it ourselves *de novo* and then, if it is necessary, we shall appoint a committee for the purpose. In any event, honourable Members who are directly concerned and others who are indirectly concerned will be consulted, because any decision that we may arrive at can be a proper decision only if it is taken after full consultation.

## 7. Gram Panchayat Elections in Madhya Bharat<sup>1</sup>

I understand that the first Gram Panchayat elections on adult franchise are taking place in Madhya Bharat soon. They will start on January 26th. This day is a special day for India, when we devote ourselves anew to the service of our motherland. Elections on this day should, therefore, have a special significance. I earnestly hope that the men and women of Madhya Bharat will exercise their franchise in a manner worthy of our country and of this day. We face serious crises and grave difficulties in India and in the world. We can only meet them if we hold together and strive, with singleness of purpose, to serve our country and our people. We cannot afford dissension amongst ourselves. We must set high standards and choose representatives of integrity and ability. We must put an end to corruption, blackmarketing and other like ills which degrade our public life. Democracy is on its trial in India in the widest sense of the word. Its success depends on how we choose and whom we choose as our representatives. I hope that these Gram Panchayat elections in Madhya Bharat will indicate that the people of that State can rise above parochial feelings and think of larger issues and the service of the country.

1. Message on the occasion of the first Gram Panchayat elections in Madhya Bharat, New Delhi, 24 January 1951. J.N. Collection.





## FUNCTIONING OF DEMOCRACY

## III. The Press



## 1. Message to the *Nation*<sup>1</sup>

I send you greetings on the 85th anniversary of the *Nation*. During its long life the *Nation* has consistently stood for good causes and for the advancement of democratic freedom all over the world. Again, we face a grave crisis from which none of us, wherever we might be, can escape. That crisis has political, economic and military aspects and, in resolving it, all these have to be borne in mind. But essentially the crisis is of the spirit of man and it can only be resolved by seeking basic remedies and not relying solely on force. It can never be resolved by hatred and violence. Arms and money go a long way but they cannot purchase the mind and spirit of man whether it is the individual or in the mass. In serving humanity and working for its advance we cannot succeed if we ignore the very things for which humanity stands and at which human progress is aimed. Good results will not come through evil means. It is therefore only in a spirit of understanding and tolerance and by adherence to the ideals for which democracy stands that we can ultimately serve the causes that we proclaim.

1. Sent to Freda Kirchwey, editor, *Nation*, a progressive journal in the United States, on 27 October 1950. J.N. Collection. The message was published in the *Nation*, 16 December 1950.

## 2. Responsibilities of a Free Press<sup>1</sup>

Mr President<sup>2</sup> and friends,

You have referred to me and addressed me as Prime Minister, and perhaps you have invited me in that capacity. Nevertheless, I would rather like to speak to you not as Prime Minister so much, although I cannot get rid of that fact, but rather informally, rather in a friendly way, as friends meeting together in earnest converse to consider difficult and baffling problems, because we do meet under stress of heavy circumstances, and today that is more especially so as all of you know better than any one else.

Now, if that is so, it is easy enough for us or for anybody to start criticising people, condemning people, condemning nations. But the whole point is: what

1. Speech at the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference, New Delhi, 3 December 1950. File No. 43(120)/50-PMS.
2. Deshbandhu Gupta.



are we driving at? If we have got a fairly clear objective before us, do we go towards that objective by what we say or do, or do we go away from it? That is the test. In normal times it does not much matter, within limits of course, what one says or does, because it cannot do very much harm; and even if it does harm, we can pull ourselves up. But in times of crisis, in times of grave emergency, it does very much matter what is said or done; a wrong word, or a wrong action may have far-reaching results. So I would like to speak to you rather informally.

The press, it is repeatedly said, performs a very essential function in life today, more especially in the life of democratic countries. In other places that function is performed under some authoritarian direction, while in democratic countries it is supposed to say just what it likes within the law's limitations, which are pretty wide. Now, that lays a tremendous burden. That burden, of course, comes anyhow where any power or any privilege comes to a group. We got independence, and we take pride in our independence. But obviously independence or freedom is not a one-sided affair; it carries enormous responsibilities—responsibilities to defend that independence when attacked; responsibilities not only to defend from external attack but, what is even more important, from an internal weakening.

After all, the thing that counts in a nation far more than any external danger is an internal rot. So freedom carries with it that responsibility, the obvious responsibility—which everyone knows—of defending that freedom from external attack. But the other responsibility ultimately is more important, and that is to maintain the inner strength, the morale, the self-confidence of a nation, which ultimately can only be done by following what I roughly call the right course and giving the right advice and, more especially, developing the habit of calm, dispassionate thought and consideration of problems. This becomes even more important in times of crisis when people are apt to become excited and hysterical and to believe every vague rumour that might come their way.

We talk of newspapers. Newspapers are of course of all kinds and in India there are thousands of them or more. There are responsible newspapers; there are newspapers which are sometimes responsible, sometime not; there are newspapers which are more irresponsible than responsible; and there are some sheets which seem to excel in flights of imagination or other acts of irresponsibility. Fortunately, in the scheme of things they are not very important. But all this forms the great picture of newspapers. In the old days it was, or at least it was thought to be, the function of government to stop such newspapers as the government thought that they had an evil tendency. That, of course, is an utterly wrong way of approach from any point of view, because you cannot cure that evil by trying in a governmental way to suppress it. But anyway that is a democratic approach to the problem.

What, then, are we to do? For sometimes the evil may grow and may become dangerous to public welfare. Well, obviously, the right way is for an organisation like this to interest itself in it directly, not of course in the sense of punishing people—there is no question of punishing—but of forming such a strong body of opinion among those who are responsible for newspapers that any backslider can be pulled up, or anyhow the public may know that he is a backslider and he is not acting right. I think that is very important, because while on the one hand the main organs of the Indian press have shown a fairly high standard of responsibility in dealing with news or situations generally—sometimes they may slip—but there are some other periodicals which amaze me by their utter irresponsibility and fantastic flights of imagination. No doubt people read them and no doubt people are affected by them. How are we going to deal with this question? It is this wider question of privilege or power bearing responsibility in its trail. You forgive me for quoting—I use other people's words, not mine—Mr Stanley Baldwin, who was the Prime Minister of Britain. Many years ago, once perhaps he got angry with the press in Britain: he said that the press had all the harlot privilege and power without responsibility. That was an extreme way of putting it but the point is that when we have any power, any right, inevitably an obligation follows that right. You cannot separate them.

Now, we have been fighting for our rights—right of freedom, right of independence—and having achieved them, we are apt to forget that the right by itself is incomplete and, in fact, cannot long exist if the obligations which accompany that right are forgotten by the nation or by a greater part of the nation. We still think much more in terms of rights and privileges and much less in terms of obligations of the individual citizen or of a group. That weakens a nation and we become then merely critics and complainants without the constructive side of it. Now, that applies to the nation as a whole and that applies as much or more to the press. That is to say, the press has fought for its own freedom from governmental interference in the old days and gradually, step by step, it has achieved a larger freedom. I think I can say that whatever our other failings might be—by 'our' I mean Government—at the present moment the amount of freedom of expression that is allowed or indulged in by the press can hardly be exceeded in any country in the world. I shall be quite frank with you. Much that appears because of that freedom seems to me exceedingly dangerous from many points of view. Nevertheless, I have no doubt in my mind that the freedom of the press from the larger point of view—not as a slogan—is an essential attribute of the democratic process and that, from any point of view, even the narrowest point of view of, shall I say, Government disliking these things or considering them dangerous, even from that point of view, it is bad to interfere with that freedom. Because ultimately you do not cure them; you merely suppress the public manifestation of it and



that idea and that thought spreads. Therefore, I would rather have a completely free press with all the dangers involved in the wrong use of that freedom than a suppressed or regulated press.

Nevertheless, the question does arise and, again, if I may refer to the larger issue of freedom of the country, if freedom is unaccompanied by responsibility which should go with that freedom which a free citizen should always feel, then that freedom gradually becomes something very near licence. Licence is a vague word and I do not like it, but it is being used in this connection and I can think of no better word for the moment. What does it do? You simply disintegrate. Licence ultimately means a mental disintegration and if there is mental disintegration in the body politic, obviously it affects every limb of it; the arms and the legs also disintegrate or weaken. That again applies to newspapers. If, with the freedom they have, the element of licence and utter irresponsibility increases, then ultimately not only does it endanger that freedom but the reputation of the press gets less and less. How are we to balance this thing? We must have that freedom and we should try to keep a certain integrity in our public activities including the press—mental integrity of approach. Of course we know that newspapermen and journalists in the past and in the present have laid down, in high terms, what the press should be and, I have no doubt, responsible newspapermen are always trying at any rate to reach that standard. Anyhow it seems to me that the only right approach to it is for newspapermen and their organization to tackle the problem and it is not for an external agency, even though that might be Government. They should raise their standards, not again by punishment, because they are not an executive branch of Government, but by making it perfectly clear to their erring brethren that what they do is bad. I have noticed that when sometimes some periodicals behave in an irresponsible way I seldom find any criticism of that in the other periodicals. I know it is a bad thing for newspapers to go for each other and I have no wish to encourage this kind of controversy between newspapermen, each calling each other names. What I mean is that a responsible body has the right to pull up any member or non-member of that body, who is a member of that profession, if he goes flagrantly wrong. It is not the question of views that I am talking about—every person has the right to express his views—but rather the utter irresponsibility, the vulgarity and the like sometimes some newspapers of no great repute may descend to. I think such a body should firmly—politely, if you like, but firmly—make it clear that they do not approve this kind of thing; that is, they should give a lead to the public in this respect.

Now, I just mentioned vulgarity. It is an odd world. We live in a rapidly changing world. We all hope that in spite of difficulties and disasters ultimately something good will emerge out of it, something better, but the fact remains that one very gravely disheartening feature of the present-day world is this rapid fall from any mental or moral standards all over the world. We disintegrate;



we gradually go to pieces. We become ultimately, because of this process of disintegration, rather neurotic and hysterical and quite unable to judge anything—because we are too much excited to judge anything. After all, unless we have certain values in life, life becomes rather empty; unless we have certain values in public conduct, in mental conduct, it is not quite clear what we are aiming at, what we are trying to do. We cannot live, certainly great countries cannot live, from hand to mouth insofar as standards are concerned; insofar as basic objectives are concerned. Now, that makes a tremendous difference to a people. Those of you who have had personal experience of the last thirty years or so of India's history will notice periods in this history when, one might say, a rather high moral tone pervaded the people.

The people are all the same. The people are not different. They have the same failings and the same virtues. It is not easy to change the whole people quickly. But you may pull them up so that they may think of their own virtues and strength or you may pull them down so that they may think more of their own failings and get entangled in them. Well, during these past thirty years we did, I think, in our public life, often enough attain high standards, unusually high standards. Well, that was due to a great man who led us and who set those standards himself, but the fact remains that we did it and because of that it is all the more noticeable and distressing to find the low standards we hold. We have to fight against that. It is a world phenomenon; it is not an Indian phenomenon. But anyhow we have to deal with it and there is the fight. Life after all may be considered from many points of view—political, economic and other points of view—which are very important, but there is something surely beyond that also; or else everything that you may gain by political thoughts and even economic welfare, which is so essentially important, all that may become rather tardy unless there is some other objective in life and some other standard that we adhere to.

And so it is most distressing not only to see a gradual passing away of what was gracious in life, but a gradual extension and increase of what is vulgar in life. Now an individual may be good or bad, vulgar or not, but it is a most dangerous thing for a country to go down the scale in that way. Now, in regard to this matter the press can perform a most important function. The press can well help in respect of, if I may say so, the vulgar approach to life or the other, the opposite of it. It has a tremendous effect. The views of a newspaper on political issues may not be accepted. I rather doubt myself if newspapers have any very great influence on political opinion. The news, of course, they give but I rather doubt if they have any very great influence and you have seen in other countries—democratic countries—how a great number of newspapers have supported a party and yet in an election the other party has gained in spite of lack of newspapers. So it appears that newspapers do not have that effect on public opinion as people would imagine. But they have a

tremendous effect by not only the news that they give from day to day, but the colour of that news, by the restraint of expression or the looseness of expression, by the vulgarity or the lack of vulgarity. There is that slight daily dose that gradually goes on affecting the reader's mind. If you tell him to do this or that, he may resist. But the daily slight dose, if it is right, it improves his mind; if it is wrong, it corrupts his mind.

There is a certain lack of social conscience in this country in spite of our high ideals. Now it is a difficult thing always to balance because, on the one hand, personally I react strongly against any idea of regimentation anywhere and much more so in a vast country like India, with so many different approaches to life, so many different aspects that are many sided. So I am against regimentation. Nevertheless, I am against a loose and incorrect behaviour of the people and lack of discipline. That again physically weakens us but, what is worse, it inevitably weakens us in other psychological ways too. So that in this matter too, I think, the press can help tremendously—not only in building up a better and a higher social conscience but a social behaviour in the little things of life.

If you think they are not little, if a man does not do little things in life, well, it is exceedingly doubtful. Now, we are in the habit of thinking that because we are always entangled in the big things of life, we need not worry about the little things of life. That is utterly and fundamentally a wrong approach. If you are, let us say, wedded or you are attracted to the ideal of truth and beauty, you cannot follow that ideal by dealing with the small things of life in an ugly and untruthful manner.

We take pride in saying that the West is a material civilization and we are spiritual. Having said so, we indulge in things which totally lack the normal social proprieties, because we say we are above them, but as a matter of fact it is not quite evident where the spirituality is affected. I do not believe that a person who ignores these small things of life, the small truths, the small decencies, the small pleasantnesses, the small graciousnesses, can take up any big thing in a big way.

It is not a question of show or, should I say, ostentation. Of course, ostentation itself is the height of vulgarity. On the one hand, we may find this almost deliberate and rather aggressive way of saying that 'oh, we don't care for these fineries of life and, therefore, we go about, let us say, in unwashed condition and generally, whether it is our clothes or our appearance, in unkempt condition', just to show that we don't care. On the other hand, there is the ostentation even in these matters, too small to discuss, to build up the life of the nation, in directing it into channels of progress.

Now, I referred just now, in my few words I said in Hindi, to the news that appeared in the morning papers today, splashed in big headlines, about the possibility of my going to Washington, having been summoned there for



discussions.<sup>3</sup> Now, so far as I know there is absolutely no foundation for all this and it is only some people's excitement and search for some way or remedy that leads them to these flights of imagination. This kind of thing, this particular thing may not do much harm although it does a little always and I beg of you, more especially in these days, to be careful. I will see that steps are taken about the development of some liaison machinery between the press and the Government and more especially the Foreign Ministry of the Government. It is very desirable and, so far as we are concerned, we should like to help in every way. It is a difficult matter, of course, always to know where to draw the line in regard to matters which are considered secret and which, if they go out, would embarrass us greatly in our relations with other countries. Now, it all depends ultimately, if I may say so quite frankly, on the measure of cooperation received from the press in keeping secrecy, otherwise it becomes difficult, if not impossible. But you will have every cooperation from us in this approach.

Now, we are meeting here today in very extraordinary circumstances of the world and there are very grave crises. I confess that the only way I can find myself approaching these big questions is in a spirit of deep earnestness and a great deal of humility. There are big questions affecting the future of the world, affecting the future happiness or misery or destruction of millions of people, and no man can consider such a question without deep misgiving about his own capacity to show the right path, and I am quite frank with you about this matter. I rather doubt if any country and the biggest of them all can have the complete direction. They are too complicated, too big, and all we can do is first of all to have an earnest desire for something. What is that something? We will surely find in the immediate context of today that that something is peace. There are many other things also. But today that is dominant. If that is the dominant approach, then how are we to attain it or at any rate help in realising it and avoiding that terrible catastrophe, that is, in other words, war. Well, surely, apart from any particular proposal that a country may put forward, a great deal depends on the approach. If you want peace among various countries, it is hardly a sensible or a logical approach to go about slanging each other, go about irritating each other, go about pointing out the faults and errors and sins of the other. That argument may be perfectly valid and you may be justified in putting forward that argument. But my point is that that argument does not lead to that atmosphere of peace but to a closing up of people's minds and when minds are closed they become impervious to any argument owing to this approach. Therefore, what is important, it seems to me, today is that for a moment we should stop this business of running down each other and keep our

3. It was reported that the name of Nehru was being mentioned in Washington as a possible participator in the Truman-Attlee talks on the Korean situation and that the U.S.A. was counting heavily on India to play the role of a peace-maker between China and the West for negotiating a peaceful solution of the East Asian crisis.



feelings within ourselves and try then, with this new approach, to find some way of stopping the rot.

The next step would be to consider these problems in this slightly new atmosphere and try to find some, at any rate, temporary solution.

And the next step would be a longer solution of longer duration for no country to endanger the world's peace on mere grounds of prestige or anger. That is all I can say about it. And I feel that, and I am quite sure, vast numbers of people all over the world in every country desire peace. Personally I am prepared to go a step further and say that there is no government in the world which really desires war. There are governments in the world which may be impelled by circumstances to believe that war is inevitable. That is a different thing, and somehow we get entangled in this net and so without any desire we are forced into it. Whether that is an example of determinism in human affairs, I do not know, but I do think that every individual in his individual capacity and larger groups, including nations, should fight against anything they consider an evil tendency and not submit to any idea of fatal determinism and thus allow themselves to go to perdition. So I hope that India will throw all its weight towards dispassionate consideration of the problems towards peace.

We here, and elsewhere too, are apt to say that this country is bad and that country is bad, as if countries are solid blocks which are good or bad. Countries consist of millions of human beings—very decent human beings, very peaceful human beings. Governments may go wrong, and politicians may go wrong even more. But do not ever talk of countries and peoples as bad. That is a bad thing to talk like that. There is a great deal of commonness in all of us in all the countries, although we may differ outwardly a great deal. Let us encourage that commonness and that friendliness, and let us not lose our heads, whatever might happen.

### 3. To B.C. Roy<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

December 16, 1950

My dear Bidhan,

...I was rather surprised to read that the Press Act was still functioning. I had an idea that our Constitution had put an end to it. We have been putting up

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

with the most virulent writings in the press, because we were told we could do nothing about it since our Judges have interpreted the Constitution.<sup>2</sup>

Apart from the law, is it worthwhile taking action against these youthful effusions, when the big criminals go scotfree. I suppose this just embitters these young men without doing much good to others.

Yours  
Jawaharlal

2. The Supreme Court and some High Courts had during 1950-51 overruled the executive in a number of cases where newspapers had been penalised for publishing matter considered to be tending to cause public disturbance. The Courts had declared that in view of Article 19(2) of the Constitution, incitement to offences which fell short of undermining the security of the State, or of encouraging the undermining of the State, could not be proceeded against.

#### 4. To G.V. Mavalankar<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 12, 1951

My dear Mr Speaker,

A ruling given by the Speaker of the Madras Legislative Assembly<sup>2</sup> has been brought to my notice. It is a little difficult to understand this ruling without having read the articles in newspapers referred to. The Speaker of the Madras Assembly has given some old quotations from England.<sup>3</sup> It is not obvious how they can be relevant in this connection. It is clear that in certain circumstances a newspaper will commit a breach of the privileges of the House, but a general statement to the effect that comments on bills or measures pending before the Assembly should be prohibited if they affect voting in the House does seem to go very far. One would have thought that it was the duty of newspapers to consider pending legislation and to criticise it, if necessary. The whole object

1. J.N. Collection.
2. On 5 February, the Speaker of the Madras Legislative Assembly ruled that an article published in the *Swatantra* on 9 December 1950 amounted to a comment on a debate going on in the House and might influence the voting and hence was tantamount to a breach of privilege.
3. The Speaker had quoted William Harcourt's condemnation of the publication in *The Times* of a forged letter in 1890 attributed to Charles Stewart Parnell (1846-1891), an Irish Member of the House of Commons. He had also cited Samuel Romilly in regard to unauthorized publication of the House of Commons proceedings in 1910.

of this is to affect voting. This, of course, must be done in a legitimate manner and not by bringing in extraneous issues, as, for instance, the publication of a forged letter in *The Times* regarding Mr Parnell.

I am bringing this to your notice because this might affect our entire relations with the press.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru







1. To G.S. Bajpai<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
27 October 1950  
midnight

My dear Girja,

I have been thinking about the Kashmir issue before the Security Council. The more I think of it, the less I like the U.K. proposal to form a committee of five members of the Council.<sup>2</sup> To get caught in this will be bad for us and it will be difficult to disentangle ourselves. If this committee or some persons merely seek to find a way out by referring to the parties concerned I would not mind much. But a specific direction to fix up details of the plebiscite will inevitably tie us up badly. I think we should clearly and emphatically oppose the formation of this committee on the ground that it cannot advance the matter any further. Every avenue has been explored by the previous commissions, etc., and certain results have been arrived at. We cannot now be asked to confine ourselves to the plebiscite issue. As there has been no agreement we must go back to essentials and have a decision on them if necessary. Let the Security Council do so or the General Assembly. Or let a period elapse for passions to cool down.

We have said our last word to Dixon. There is nothing more to be said and it should be clearly understood by B.N. Rau that we are not prepared to agree about it.

But as what we said to Dixon—indeed the very basis of it—was not accepted by Pakistan, even that matter cannot be discussed with profit any further. It is for Pakistan to make a move. To talk of a full plebiscite for the whole State, after all that has happened and our inability to agree and Dixon's report, appears to me to be absurd and totally unrealistic. Yet that is exactly what Pakistan says and what the committee may try to impose upon us. I think we should keep out of discussing any such details. Pakistan is making a last effort by shouting and cursing and threatening to get something out of the Security Council.<sup>3</sup> We should resist this strongly even at the risk of offending the Council. The kind of propaganda that Pakistan has been carrying on is so

1. J.N. Collection. The gist of the first four paragraphs was cabled to the Indian delegation at the U.N.
2. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 247-248.
3. Liaquat Ali in an interview to the correspondent of the *Ceylon Observer* at Karachi towards the end of September 1950 said there was no chance of India and Pakistan settling the Kashmir dispute and hence the Council must act. Zafrullah Khan, Foreign Minister of Pakistan, in his speech to the U.N. General Assembly hoped that Kashmir being one of the danger spots of the world, the U.N. would take equally strong action as in Korea.



scandalous that it should put it out of count. I think B.N. Rau's attention should be especially drawn to it. We are not going to be bullied by threats of war, etc. If Pakistan wants war then there is no point in these discussions. B.N. Rau should compare this worked up hysteria and war propaganda with India's attitude.

In view of this cry of war in Pakistan, the right thing to do is to consider the whole matter afresh. We should demand a decision on aggression, etc. The U.K. and U.S.A. want to avoid an acrimonious debate. Well, we are not keen on it. But as a price we are not going to pay what is suggested—that is, get tied up with the committee that is proposed. Instead we would rather have that acrimonious debate not only in the Security Council but if necessary in the Assembly.

I know that for various reasons we have not got much sympathy in the U.N. That has to be faced, but that is no reason why we should surrender. I would rather break with the U.N. than do this.

Apart from the U.N., the position is developing fairly rapidly in our favour—both in our part of Kashmir and negatively in 'Azad Kashmir' and Pakistan. Hence this hysteria and shouting in upper circles in Pakistan.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 2. Kashmir Must Remain with India<sup>1</sup>

Ultimately it is the people of Kashmir who have to decide their own future.

If Kashmir goes to Pakistan it will be completely ruined. I want Kashmir to be part of India. I want Kashmir and India to have cordial relations with each other. As a Kashmiri and Indian, I do not want Kashmir to be part of Pakistan because I am fully convinced that it would spell Kashmir's ruin. I do not want Kashmir to be ruined.

I welcome the resolution passed yesterday by the All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference proposing the setting up of a constituent assembly based on adult franchise for determining the future shape and affiliations of the State. It would further strengthen the National Conference. The elections would

1. Speech at a meeting of the workers of the All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference. Srinagar, 28 October 1950. From the *National Herald*, 29 October 1950.

also enable them to know the people's wishes. It is possible that some countries may object to the holding of elections on the plea that the Kashmir question is before the United Nations and yet undecided. But that would be a wrong approach as the people in Kashmir cannot stop all their activity and adopt an attitude of 'wait and see'.

The Security Council has not been able to judge the Kashmir issue calmly or on merits because of heated tempers over such problems as Korea and the Russo-American conflict.

I do not understand why the United Nations finds the Kashmir question, which seems so clear and simple to us, so twisted and insoluble. I thought they would take a decision in a few days. But by delaying and mixing it with other issues, they are still without solution after three years.

About seven months from today elections will be held in India also. The election work is proceeding with great speed but the problem is a vast one. For the first time in world history about seventeen to eighteen crores of people would vote. There are difficulties in procuring sufficient paper and finding presses to print names.

I remember my visit to Kashmir six months ago when I had stressed two things, namely, that it is for India and Kashmir to decide either to carry on their relationship or break and that they could not let the communal question colour their views. India never accepted the two-nation theory even when the country was partitioned. So also today India never would agree to it. Moreover, India and Kashmir have developed closer ties. In fact, Kashmir is part of our heart. Naturally, these sentiments will affect the attitude of the people of Kashmir towards India although ultimately the people of Kashmir, through an elected constituent assembly, will ratify the formal accession of the State to India.

It is because of this development of deep sentiments among the peoples that the final disposal of the Kashmir issue will have far-reaching consequences for the people of India as also of Pakistan.

It is amazing that other nations look at Kashmir in a superficial way. Their attitude is that since about eighty-two per cent of the people of Kashmir are Muslims the State should accede to Pakistan. These countries look at the Kashmir question through coloured glasses. They often think of questions like defence and strategic bases in Kashmir from their own point of view. Out of fear perhaps they want to bargain with the future of forty lakhs of Kashmiris to suit their particular policies. That is one reason why countries like America and Britain have failed to take a realistic attitude towards Kashmir even in the United Nations.

In one instance, Korea, the United Nations have taken a decision in twenty-four hours whereas the Kashmir issue has been hanging fire for three years. When the issue was sent to the United Nations by India it was thought that it



would take about twenty days for the United Nations to come to some decision about it. But it has dragged on and on and the United Nations till now have not touched even the fringe of the problem. Several nations have adopted a 'shopkeeper's attitude' towards Kashmir which is most unhelpful. Despite the failings and weaknesses of the United Nations, the organization is very necessary for the world. It has done good work in the past.

It seems it has become a profession with the leaders of Pakistan to talk of *jehad* against India over the Kashmir issue. But let me tell you that this is not the way strong and brave people or a nation behave. So far as we are concerned, we refuse to be deflected from our policy in Kashmir by these threats or hysteria. Should at any time our freedom be endangered, we shall meet the danger with all the strength and power at our command.

Some articles against India have been written from Bombay by a person whom I do not want to name. This person was in detention in Kashmir, but after his release he has started writing scurrilous articles against India. These articles were published in some Indian newspapers and splashed prominently in Pakistan papers. Even though the activity of this person amounts to treachery, plain and simple, yet the Government have not taken action against him.

Of late I have been criticised for my foreign policy in certain articles and editorial comments in the United States.<sup>2</sup> It is a strange thing that only two months ago I was acclaimed as the leader of Asia, as one of three or four top-ranking statesmen of the world by these very newspapers. Yet, today, they have gone to the extent of calling me a man with a deranged mind. Does this mean that I have lost all intelligence I possessed? I am not at all affected by such comments.

Although now stopped, stern comments, strongly worded and vitriolic in tone, appeared in the Soviet press against me, the Government and the Congress leaders. Perhaps, these angry comments were made because India does not follow the line they want her to follow in the international sphere. They think that India should pattern her political policies on a certain line. That would mean adopting rigidly in politics also what is found in religious edicts.

India is not prepared to have any political *pirs* to tell her what to do and what not to do. Evidently, newspapers which write against the Indian foreign policy in the U.S. derived it from their political *pir*. Such a thing would be easy to do for a country which is completely dependent on another country, but India shall never bow down before anybody either because of fear or otherwise. India will continue to judge every issue separately and take an independent stand in keeping with the United Nations principles for the cause of peace.

2. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 456 and 459.



Two or three days ago I have said that this generation is sentenced to hard labour; the people today have to work hard. They cannot rest on their oars thinking that after the achievement of freedom everything else has also been achieved. India has to take many strides forward yet. We are willing to learn from all countries all their good points, be it the Soviet Union or the United States. But, in doing so, we have also to leave out what is bad in those countries.

### 3. Kashmir and World Politics<sup>1</sup>

We do not want to have an aggressive war policy in this world; it is against the ideals for which we have worked during the last thirty years. But at the same time, we want efficient and first class defence forces for the protection of our freedom, and there comes your responsibility.

This Kashmir question has not been considered on its merits by other nations. It has become a pawn in the game of world politics. World Powers support Pakistan because Pakistan toes their line while we do not.

We are here at the call of the people of Kashmir. Our policy here has been in the interest of world peace. I am convinced that we have progressed on the right lines.

The border area of Sikang between Tibet and China has long been claimed by both. That has created tension and an element of fear is evident in China's attitude towards this area and Tibet as a whole.

In the beginning, we tried to steer clear of international complications, but, being a part of this world, we could not do so for too long. New Delhi has become one of the most important diplomatic capitals in the world. I refer to the strategic position India occupies in the world. In the ancient days people came to India from Central and Eastern Asia. India also sent large colonisation forces—not for imperial but cultural colonisation—to many countries.

Central and Eastern Asia are today in a state of turmoil. Look at China. There has been no minor revolution or one clique removing another. The revolution there has affected four hundred million people. China has now a very strong central government although weak points do exist. Now, this

1. Address to the officers of the Indian Army, Srinagar, 29 October 1950. From the *National Herald* and *The Hindu*, 30 October 1950.

revolution also has upset the balance of power in the world context. The centre of gravity has shifted from Europe to Asia. Hence, as we are nearer this centre of gravity, it has affected us in greater measure.

Britain after two world wars is now a second-rate Power. The Britons are, however, still forging ahead. We in India can take lessons from them. Our productive capacity is very low. By production, I mean production by the peasants, labourers and scientists.

For the maintainance of first-class forces, stepping up of industrial output is necessary. We have to plan in the context of world events.

If world war breaks out, it is not going to be a push-button affair. It will mean complete destruction of Europe, including England. All the atom bombs of the world cannot end wars soon. Hence, millions and millions of people will be destroyed. Military victory is not enough. We have seen after the last world war how the apple cart of one-time allies was upset and the whole thing went wrong.

#### 4. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram 400.<sup>2</sup> We do not wish to communicate our ideas to U.S. or U.K. in form of a resolution. After exploring possibilities both of overall and partial plebiscite, Dixon concluded that only prospect of settlement lay in direct negotiations between parties. We are ourselves of opinion that, after all that has happened, this is most suitable way, as it casts burden on parties concerned to come to agreement. If, however, Pakistan, as previously reported in press, not willing to enter into direct negotiations with us, only other ways open are debate in Council on basis suggested in our telegram 24388 or a slight variation of above procedure enabling President of Council to help to bring the two parties together in an effort to reach agreement. In this process, he can, if he so wishes, call for assistance of one or two other Members of Council. You can write to U.S. Delegation on these lines.

1. New Delhi, 3 November 1950. J.N. Collection. Extracts.
2. Rau informed Delhi on 2 November 1950 that the Anglo-U.S. delegations were not interested in Dixon's proposal to refer the Kashmir issue back to the parties for settlement. They wanted the alternative proposal received by Rau from New Delhi on 31 October 1950 in writing. Since the alternative proposal was communicated to him in general terms he could not put it into writing and sought instructions.



2. For your information we might add that we do not propose to give up any point on which we have laid stress before Dixon. No amount of pressure tactics will induce us to agree to any proposal which weakens our position or entangles us in admissions which might prove harmful in future. Kashmir National Conference has taken up a strong line<sup>3</sup> and we cannot ignore them.

3. The National Conference resolved in Srinagar on 27 October 1950 that a constituent assembly based on adult suffrage and embracing all sections of the people should be convened immediately "to determine the future shape and affiliations of the State."

## 5. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram 406 dated November 6th.<sup>2</sup>

I agree entirely with instructions contained in our telegram 24395<sup>3</sup> of November 6th. Whatever impression Zafrullah may have created upon U.K. and U.S.A. delegations, we must adhere firmly to policy which we have conveyed to you. If U.K. or U.S.A. attempt to force our hands we must tell them clearly that we cannot agree and will vote against any resolution sought to be imposed upon us. International developments make it all the more imperative that no false step should be taken in Kashmir. Otherwise the very thing that U.K. and U.S.A. fear might be accelerated. As it is, Kashmir is calm and there is no foreseeable chance of any intrusion or infiltration from Tibet into Kashmir. Developments in Korea, and probably in Tibet also, are consequence of unwise steps taken in Korea. Situation now exceedingly grave from point of view of widespread extension of conflict leading even to world war. In these circumstances it would be exceedingly rash for U.K. and U.S.A.

1. New Delhi, 8 November 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Rau pointed out that Zafrullah Khan had impressed the British and American delegations that public opinion in Pakistan and other Muslim countries would not tolerate postponement of further action by the Security Council on the Kashmir question and that referring the dispute to parties for settlement through direct negotiation in accordance with Dixon's proposal would mean delay and would enable the Jammu and Kashmir constituent assembly to present the Security Council with a *fait accompli*. Britain and the U.S. believed that owing to recent events in Tibet any delay in settling the dispute between India and Pakistan would facilitate communist infiltration.
3. Rau was advised to oppose the suggestion that pending a settlement the responsibility for defence of Kashmir should be divided between India and Pakistan as it would prejudice India's claim to defend the Northern Areas and all negotiations regarding the future of Kashmir.



to take any step regarding Kashmir which is not agreed to by us and Kashmir Government and which will therefore only lead to worsening of situation.

Proposed constituent assembly of Jammu and Kashmir cannot possibly meet before June next year. Even electoral rolls cannot be prepared for large areas during winter months. Hence no question of rapid decision by it.

We are not impressed nor should anyone knowing facts be impressed by Pakistan's pressure tactics and whipped up propaganda. In any event, we are not going to change our policy.

In view of all this you should take up firm attitude with U.K. and U.S.A. and communicate with U.S.A. delegation as previously suggested.

## 6. To S.M. Abdullah<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

November 8, 1950

My dear Shaikh Saheb,

We are being overwhelmed by all kinds of events in the Far East. The crisis deepens and might well lead to more extensive war. Tibet has brought new problems for us, and Nepal has now come into the picture. All this keeps us busy enough.

Meanwhile, the question of Kashmir is suspended somewhere in mid-air at Lake Success. I have not written to you about it, because we were not departing in the slightest from our policy. You know that the U.K. has been toying with a resolution about a committee of five non-permanent members of the Security Council. We refused to accept that. Pakistan has been frightening the U.K. and U.S.A. people by all kinds of prophecies and threats. Tibet is brought into the picture and it is said that your proposal to have a constituent assembly will make things worse and will present an accomplished fact to the United Nations.

I have made it perfectly clear to B.N. Rau that in this matter we are not going to budge at all from our position. We are tired of all these committees and subterfuges. There are only two ways open. One is to allow matters to rest where they are and leave the parties to come to terms, as Dixon suggested. Or else to have a full debate in the Security Council where the whole history will have to be considered and decisions given. If that leads to bitterness and acrimony, then we cannot help it.

1. J.N. Collection.

Ultimately we suggested a minor variation of No. 1. This was that the parties should themselves decide. But the President of the Security Council might help in bringing them together, if he so chose. (The President during this month is a Yugoslav<sup>2</sup>). Thus we have tried to steer clear of further entanglements and we have pointed out to B.N. Rau that any attempt by the Security Council to upset the balance in Kashmir would lead to harmful consequences, even from the point of view of the U.S. and U.K. Also that your constituent assembly can, in no event, meet before June next year. I am just informing you briefly of this position. I hope the President's visit<sup>3</sup> will go off successfully.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. Ales Bebler.

3. Rajendra Prasad visited Srinagar from 9 to 12 November 1950.

## 7. The Constitutional Status of Kashmir State<sup>1</sup>

I have read the summary dated the 26th October<sup>2</sup> and the draft of the letter to Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah.<sup>3</sup> I have not seen the other papers.

I understand that Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah and, possibly, some other Ministers are coming to Delhi in three or four days' time. I think it would be desirable to postpone sending any reply till he comes here.

My first reactions to the four points mentioned are as follows:

(1) I think that Shaikh Sahib's objection<sup>4</sup> has some force. Giving the Union full authority to delimit any area as a cantonment area is a large power

1. Note to Vishnu Sahay, Secretary, Kashmir Affairs, M.H.A., 15 November 1950, J.N. Collection.

2. Vishnu Sahay wrote that the President of India after consulting the Government of Jammu and Kashmir had issued on 26 January 1950 a declaration under Article 370 of the Constitution stating as to which provisions in the Union, the State and the Concurrent Lists corresponded to matters specified in the Instrument of Accession. Shaikh Abdullah had objected to four items in the declaration.

3. Shaikh Abdullah's objection to entries in the declaration, not conforming to Article 370, was overruled by Sahay. Sahay also did not accept Abdullah's contention that the Jammu and Kashmir constituent assembly would not ratify the items in the declaration objected to by him as Sahay felt that the assembly's jurisdiction was restricted to matters not specified in the Instrument of Accession.

4. Abdullah contended that the Union Government would have arbitrary powers if delimitation of cantonment areas was allowed in the Union List.



which may be exercised in a way which may interfere with many local arrangements, etc. Of course, it may be said that we shall only use this power reasonably. The argument of reason applies to both sides. I think it would not be improper for us to modify our standpoint somewhat and to say "all existing cantonment areas plus such other areas as may be delimited for such purpose with the consent of the State Government."

(2) The provision<sup>5</sup> as it stands seems to me correct but I take it that this refers to working or extracting these minerals. The property in those minerals would continue to be of the State Government. They will not be able to sell it to anyone without our permission. We can buy it from them or sell it on their behalf.

(3) I am not quite clear about this provision,<sup>6</sup> more especially in regard to external affairs. I should like to consider this a little more.

(4) I agree with what is being said.<sup>7</sup>

The reference to the constituent assembly is correct. Nevertheless, the position is peculiar, because the whole position of the Kashmir State itself is peculiar today. It is for this reason that we are treating it as different from the other States. The constituent assembly may not, in strict law, have authority to deal with the matter concerning the Instrument of Accession and yet, in the circumstances, occasion may arise when they may express themselves in regard to accession itself. That expression might well be in our favour and strengthen our position. If we tell them that they cannot deal with this question then this fact may go against us.

A copy of this note might be sent to Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar.

5. The Jammu and Kashmir Government agreed that atomic energy was a Union subject but wanted the minerals required for the production of atomic energy to be excluded from the Union's jurisdiction.
6. Abdullah objected to preventive detention for reasons of defence and internal affairs falling within the Union's jurisdiction.
7. Abdullah also objected to trade relations with foreign countries being a Union subject. He was assured that appointment of trade commissioners by him would not be objected to.

## 8. To S.M. Abdullah<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

November 29, 1950

My dear Shaikh Saheb,

In view of developments in Tibet, Ladakh comes a little more into the world

1. J.N. Collection.



picture. There are frequent references to Ladakh in the foreign press.<sup>2</sup> I do not personally think that these Tibetan developments will have any marked effect on Ladakh in the near future. Nevertheless, we have to be wide awake and wary.

I heard yesterday that the Head Lama from Leh and some other Lamas were here in Delhi and that they wanted to see me. I have not met them yet as I have been very busy and I have asked Dharma Vira to see them. Later I might also see them for a few minutes. Thus far, even Dharma Vira has not seen them. But I have heard indirectly that they are very unhappy over the state of affairs in Ladakh and feel rather bitter about it.

I do not know anything about the conditions in Ladakh but I feel that Ladakh, in the present context, has to be handled with great care, and someone with a wide appreciation of events must keep in constant touch with Ladakh or be in charge of it. It is to be considered almost an international problem because of Tibetan developments. It becomes essential also that the people of Ladakh should be more or less contented. If they are discontented, there will be a tendency to intrigue with outsiders. It is obvious that the Buddhist religion and the monasteries play a great part in the life of Ladakh.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, it becomes necessary to treat these monasteries in a friendly way and have their goodwill and cooperation.

Ladakh has been a completely neglected province of Kashmir State for a hundred years. Practically nothing has been done for it and they have a sensation of being a colony of Kashmir. This sensation has to go and they must be made to feel that they are common sharers in the freedom of the State and that they are going to profit by it. They should have the sensation of doing things by themselves, that is, of a measure of self-government. All this may take some time but beginnings might be made in making them feel that way. Where possible, Ladakhis might be appointed to offices of responsibility and responsible positions in Ladakh. I am sure that even friendly and cooperative treatment will go a long way. If you took interest in this matter and discussed it with Ladakhi representatives and assured them of your policy, this itself would prove very helpful.

It is in this context that I have been thinking of what these Ladakhis here are said to feel. These people know little about the outside world and are totally inexperienced. They may even act foolishly, but it does seem to me

2. *The Times* (London) on 27 November 1950, speaking of triple threat to India's security from Tibet, Nepal and Kashmir, wrote: "As to Kashmir, which has some four hundred miles of common frontier with Tibet (the northern part of it undemarcated as between Ladakh and Tibet), the stalemate over Indian and Pakistani claims has continued...."
3. In Ladakh, Buddhism and Buddhist monasteries besides being religious institutions play an important role in the economic life of the people as they own vast lands and employ villagers to work as farmers or tenants.

important to remove any trace of bitterness and resentment from their minds. The Head Lama is an influential person and if he feels that way, many others will also do so. Ultimately, a difficult situation might be created.

I understand, second hand, that their main grievance is that the officials appointed there are not good and have functioned badly; that they have no integrity and are widely disliked and distrusted. If this is their charge, it should be investigated. Apart from the truth of the charge, it is necessary to send an officer there who is trusted by the people if he has to produce any results.

Their second trouble is, I believe, in connection with the land reforms.<sup>4</sup> I wonder if some special attention could be paid to this matter so that some kind of cooperative farming might be associated with the Gompas. It will be difficult to do anything at present which breaks up the whole religious structure of Ladakh.

When I see the Lamas here, I shall, of course, refer them to you. I shall not say much.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal

4. The Big Landed Estates Abolition Act promulgated in Jammu and Kashmir on 22 October 1950 provided for confiscation of land in excess of 125 acres in favour of the tillers.

## 9. To S.M. Abdullah<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 1, 1950

My dear Shaikh Saheb,

I have already written to you about Ladakh and the deputation of Lamas from there. I had not seen these people then. Dharma Vira saw them at my instance and prepared a note, which I enclose in original. Thereafter I met the group and had a talk with them. They gave me some papers which also I am enclosing for your consideration.<sup>2</sup>

I cannot of course go into all these matters. But I have a growing feeling that it is of considerable importance how Ladakh is treated. This is so not only because of Ladakh but because of the whole Kashmir problem as well as because of developments in Tibet. All kinds of complications might arise, if we are not careful. I would therefore earnestly request you to take this matter

1. J.N. Collection.

2. The note and papers have not been reprinted.



in hand yourself and try to remove all legitimate grievances. It is clear that these people are feeling repressed and frustrated and have a sensation of complete neglect by Government. That is a bad feeling. If this has spread or might spread generally to the Lamas in Ladakh, it will influence large numbers of people there. Apart from other things, it may assume an aspect of the Lama religion being ignored and bypassed. That idea, if it spreads, may do a great deal of injury. I have just been reading a statement<sup>3</sup> issued by the Government of China about Tibet. They lay the greatest stress on their desire to respect the Lama religion of Tibet and its customs and privileges. They are wise in doing so. I think we should at least adopt that policy.

The question of giving some scope for employment to Ladakhis should also be explored. Then there is the charge of lack of integrity and corruption.

The last, and probably the most important, point raised is about the new land laws insofar as they affect the Gompas. I think it should be possible to find a way out without doing injury to the law. I think there is something in the contention that the Gompas would break up if they are deprived of the support derived from these lands. That would mean a basic upset in the system prevalent in Ladakh and it would vitally affect their religious practice and traditions. Probably some kind of cooperative ownership would meet the situation.

I cannot obviously go into these matters, as I do not know much about them. I have referred these Lamas to you and asked them to see you on their return to Srinagar. I hope you will be good enough to discuss these matters with them and give them some kind of assurance.

As you will observe, we are facing a very grave international situation and are possibly on the verge of a world war. The future is dark from the point of view of this unhappy world of ours. In this state of affairs we have to carry all kinds of our people with us to meet the dangers and perils that might arise.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal

3. A proclamation on 9 November 1950 declared: "...life and property of the Tibetan Lamas and people will be protected. freedom of religious belief will be safeguarded and Lamas' temples will be protected. The People's Liberation Army will respect the Tibetan peoples' religious beliefs as well as their traditional and local customs."



## 10. To N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

December 16, 1950

My dear Gopalaswami,

Vishnu Sahay has sent me a note about the proposed proclamation or notification for a constituent assembly in Kashmir.<sup>2</sup> He has also sent me two drafts—one prepared by D.P. Dhar<sup>3</sup> and the other by Mukerjee.<sup>4</sup>

I should like to discuss this matter with you. But, meanwhile, I might indicate my views about some aspects of this proclamation:

1. I think that the Yuvaraj should issue it and not the Maharaja. Bringing in the Maharaja will give rise to needless criticism. Besides, the Maharaja might not agree or, at any rate, might delay matters considerably.

2. I do not think any reference should be made in the proclamation about the areas under the occupation of foreign armed forces. The proclamation should merely refer to the Jammu and Kashmir State. It is enough to say, as has been said, that the constituent assembly shall have power to act notwithstanding any vacancy in the membership thereof. Any reference to the occupied areas will create difficulties in the Security Council. If, at a later stage, we feel that some special provision is necessary for those areas, another proclamation can issue. I do not think such a necessity will arise.

3. I am entirely opposed to saying in the proclamation (as has been said in Mukerjee's draft) that the constituent assembly will decide on the question of accession of Kashmir State to India. Apart from this creating trouble in the Security Council, this is a wrong approach. We should not refer to accession at all and we should accept facts as they are. I have stated publicly<sup>5</sup> that the proposed constituent assembly will not come in the way of any decision by the United Nations. That is the only position to take up.

4. I do not think there should be any provision in the proclamation about the Constitution to be framed by the constituent assembly to be in conformity

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Vishnu Sahay in a note of 14 December wanted to know: (1) whether the proclamation would be issued by the Maharaja or by the Yuvaraj, (2) the terms of the proposed proclamation, (3) arrangements to be made for the representatives of areas under occupation of foreign armed forces, and (4) the provisions to be made in the proposed proclamation to ensure that the Constitution of the State framed by the State constituent assembly was in accord with the Constitution of India.

3. Durga Prasad Dhar (1918-1975): Home Secretary, Jammu and Kashmir Government, 1947; Deputy Home Minister, 1948-57, and Minister, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, 1961-68; Ambassador of India to U.S.S.R., 1969-71; Union Minister of Planning and Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, 1972-74.

4. S.N. Mukerjee (1898-1963): Joint Secretary and Draftsman in the Constituent Assembly of India, 1947-1949; Secretary, Rajya Sabha, 1952-1963.

5. See *post*, pp. 333-334.

with the Constitution of India. This again should be presumed and by making such a statement we do not remove any difficulty, if such exists.

I think we should expedite the issue of a proclamation. You must have seen Zafrullah's letter<sup>6</sup> to the Secretary-General of the U.N., in which he takes exception to this proposed constituent assembly. We should avoid saying anything which might create difficulties for us in the U.N. The simpler and the shorter the proclamation, the better. After all, it is always easy to add to it later if necessity arises.

I am sending you the papers that Vishnu Sahay has sent me.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

6. Zafrullah Khan drew the attention of the Security Council on 14 December 1950 to the October resolution of the National Conference and to its subsequent statement that the constituent assembly would ratify Kashmir's accession to India and requested the Council to ask India to refrain from proceeding with the proposal for a constituent assembly for Jammu and Kashmir and any other action which might prejudice the holding of a plebiscite.

## 11. To S.M. Abdullah<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 16, 1950

My dear Shaikh Saheb,

I returned from Bombay today. Sardar Patel's death has been a great blow to us and will cast a heavier burden on all of us.

I have seen today various drafts for the proclamation for a constituent assembly in Jammu and Kashmir. I have not had any talk with Gopalaswami about them yet. I propose to do so soon. There are one or two points, however, which I should like to mention here.

1. I think the proclamation should be issued by the Yuvaraj.
2. I think it is definitely undesirable to say in the proclamation that the constituent assembly will decide about the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India. No reference to this should be made and we should proceed on the assumption of existing facts in regard to accession.

3. I think that no reference should be made in the proclamation to the areas in enemy hands. This is not necessary and it will only give rise to difficulties in the Security Council.

1. J.N. Collection.



Zafrullah has already raised this question in the United Nations in a letter he has written to the Secretary-General of the U.N. We should avoid saying or doing anything which might embarrass us at this stage in the U.N. Apart from this, I do not think it necessary for any mention of this should be made in the proclamation.

I think this proclamation should be as short and simple as possible. It is always possible for additions to be made to it at a later stage if that is found necessary.

In regard to accession, while the proclamation should say nothing, I think that the National Conference should clearly state, or rather repeat what it has said, that it stands firmly for the continuance of the accession. A clear and firm attitude is far better than a doubtful one.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 12. To S.M. Abdullah<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 29, 1950

My dear Shaikh Saheb,

I am sorry I was unable to have a talk with you when you came here last.<sup>2</sup> I was in a hurry to go to Government House for the banquet to the Australian Prime Minister,<sup>3</sup> and as I was the host, I had to be in time for it.

During the few minutes I had with you, you mentioned to me about two matters which were still unsettled in regard to the proclamation. I gave you my own reactions immediately. I have since thought over the matter fully and have also consulted my colleagues. Indeed we had a meeting today at which Rajaji, Maulana Azad and Gopalaswami were present and we considered this question thoroughly. It seemed to us of great importance that nothing should be said in the proclamation which creates obvious difficulties for us in the Security Council. We do not mind facing the Security Council on the merits, whatever the difficulties. But to be accused of a breach of faith with them and some kind of underhand dealing would be very bad. We have assured them that the constituent assembly envisaged for Kashmir is not intended to come in the way of what the Security Council is considering. For anything to

1. J.N. Collection.

2. On 26 December 1950.

3. Robert Gordon Menzies (1894-1978); Prime Minister of Australia, 1939-41 and 1949-66.



be done now which goes against our assurance would put us in a very embarrassing position and would give a great handle not only to Pakistan but to the other countries that are not too friendly to us in this matter. Quite apart from the Kashmir issue itself, and that is important enough, it would raise grave difficulties.

There will be two courses open to us: one is to adhere to what we have said to them and, thus, to say something contrary to what the Kashmir Government says; or alternatively to support the Kashmir Government and go against what we have ourselves said to the Security Council. Both courses are obviously undesirable. The latter course might even lead to a conflict between us and the Security Council and the U.N. These are serious matters at any time and more particularly at the present moment in the world when we are entangled with vast issues of peace and war. You will appreciate, I am sure, that it would be highly unbecoming for us to do something which brings a charge of a breach of faith and affects our honour and prestige.

I do not myself see the necessity for taking a step which raises these difficulties. A proclamation for a constituent assembly should be as simple and short as possible, as such proclamations normally are. To refer to it as sovereign is very unusual and I do not for the moment remember a precedent for it. But precedents apart, this might affect India's whole *locus standi* in the matter. We might not have any authority then to speak on behalf of Kashmir at the U.N. or elsewhere. If so, India's whole case in regard to Kashmir collapses and even our presence there cannot be easily justified. This would become a trump card in the hands of Pakistan.

I would therefore earnestly suggest to you not to say any such thing in the proclamation. Nor does it seem to me necessary to refer in this proclamation in any way to previous proclamations. Any such reference is not particularly helpful and, to some extent, would even be a limiting factor. Normally the very idea of a constituent assembly is that it has power to decide the questions before it. We must presume this power and go ahead. Legal documents do not help much except in courts of law. When the fate of nations is considered, other factors are more important.

As you know, I am leaving on the 1st morning.<sup>4</sup> I should have liked to have discussed this matter with you more fully, but I cannot do so, unless this is kept pending till my return. But I would suggest that it need not be kept pending and that it might be discussed by you fully with Maulana, Rajaji and Gopalaswami, whenever it suits your convenience.

With all good wishes for the New Year,

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal

4. Nehru left for Bangalore on 1 January 1951 to inaugurate the Indian Science Congress session on the following day.

### 13. Message to C.R. Attlee<sup>1</sup>

Thank you for your message<sup>2</sup> regarding Kashmir which your High Commissioner gave me today. I am always willing to discuss Kashmir, informally and outside Conference, with you. I should also have no objection to doing so in same way with one or two other Commonwealth Prime Ministers if this proves likely to be helpful. I cannot however agree to subject being included in agenda of Conference or even to discussing it informally with all Commonwealth Prime Ministers. Apart from creating awkward precedent, such a procedure is unlikely to promote a settlement.

1. New Delhi, 31 December 1950. Copy in V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Attlee suggested on 31 December private discussions about Kashmir with Nehru and Liaquat Ali Khan during the forthcoming Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference. He did not accept Liaquat Ali's request to include a discussion on Kashmir in the agenda of the Conference but proposed informal talks between the Prime Ministers.

### 14. Informal Discussions at London<sup>1</sup>

...Mr Nehru said he was very sorry to learn that Mr Liaquat Ali Khan had, for the moment, decided not to come to the meeting. He had first heard of this difficulty five or six days previously when he had received a message from Mr Attlee. He raised no objection to the line which Mr Attlee had taken. A meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers had, as such, no power, formally or informally, to deal with issues arising between individual members. He himself was, however, willing that some of the other Prime Ministers should join with himself and Mr Liaquat Ali Khan in informal talks about the Kashmir question. The only difference between Mr Menzies' proposal and that already made by Mr Attlee was that the suggestion should now be put forward on behalf of the meeting as a whole. He did not see how it was possible to go further.

1. Minutes of the first meeting of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers, London, 4 January 1951. J.N. Collection. Extracts. For the minutes of this meeting dealing with the Korean war, see *post*, pp. 462-463.



After some further discussion it was agreed that a telegram should be sent to Mr Liaquat Ali Khan in the following terms:

“The Prime Ministers in conference have asked me to send you the following message in reply to yours of 4th January which I read to them:

We all greatly regret your absence from our meetings. Each of the other Prime Ministers endorses the proposal in my last telegram to you that there should be informal discussion of the Kashmir problem between such Prime Ministers as wish to take part. You will agree that no one of us can insist on the attendance of any particular one of us. But several of us, including Mr Nehru, have expressed their willingness to take part in such informal talks.

In these circumstances we all urge you to come to London. Your presence would greatly help our counsels at this critical moment”....

## 15. Cable to Foreign Affairs Committee<sup>1</sup>

I met Attlee yesterday<sup>2</sup> and repeated our view regarding discussion of Kashmir during present Conference. I pointed out impropriety of this and further, even informal meeting of kind suggested would lead to declamatory statements yielding no results. Further, that I could only repeat our present position and could not add to it without consulting all my colleagues in Delhi and Kashmir. Attlee agreed but said that purely informal talk might take place, and telegraphed accordingly to Liaquat Ali, who replied this morning that since Commonwealth Premiers collectively would not agree to discuss Kashmir even informally he saw no advantage in joining Conference. This morning, at Menzies' suggestion, message has been sent to Liaquat Ali on behalf of Conference that, while no Prime Minister can be pressed to join even informal talks on Kashmir issue, several Prime Ministers including me were prepared to do so. Liaquat Ali will probably announce his final decision tomorrow.<sup>3</sup> Commonwealth Premiers who have expressed willingness to join informal talks are Canada,<sup>4</sup> Australia and New Zealand.<sup>5</sup>

1. London, 4 January 1951. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

2. Nehru reached London on 3 January 1951.

3. Liaquat Ali stated in Karachi on 6 January 1951 that as the Commonwealth Prime Ministers “are willing to take part in a joint session on Kashmir”, he had decided to attend the Conference.

4. Louis Stephen St Laurent.

5. Sydney George Holland (1893-1961); Prime Minister of New Zealand, 1949-57.



## 16. Pakistan's Attitude to Informal Discussions<sup>1</sup>

...Mr Nehru said that everything possible had been done to meet Mr Liaquat Ali Khan's wishes. He still hoped that Mr Liaquat Ali Khan would come to London, not only for discussions on Kashmir but because of the larger issues involved. but if Mr Liaquat Ali Khan adopted an unreasonable attitude over this, he himself would have to reconsider his own offer to join in informal discussions about Kashmir. He could see no hope of any success from such talks if an unreasonable attitude was adopted about the number of persons who should join in them.

In further discussion the point was made that no further message should be sent to Mr Liaquat Ali Khan on behalf of the meeting until he had sent his personal reply to the message sent on the previous day. It would, however, be open to individual Prime Ministers to inform him, through their High Commissioners in Karachi, of their readiness to take part in informal talks about Kashmir....

1. Minutes of the third meeting of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers, London, 5 January 1951. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

## 17. Informal Conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers<sup>1</sup>

This evening, I attended an informal conference about the Kashmir question. This was originally fixed to be held at 10, Downing Street, but, owing to Mr Menzies's illness, it was decided to hold it in Mr Menzies's room at the Savoy Hotel. We met at 8.30 p.m. The Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Ceylon<sup>2</sup> and Pakistan<sup>3</sup> were present. We discussed this matter for about an hour and a half.

2. Mr Menzies and Mr Attlee made some preliminary remarks about the extreme desirability of the Kashmir issue being settled, more especially because of the world situation. They referred to a plebiscite having been agreed to and only the conditions relating thereto being subject to dispute. Mr Menzies

1. Note, London, 9 January 1951. J.N. Collection.
2. Don Stephen Senanayake.
3. Liaquat Ali reached London on 7 January 1951..

expressed his opinion that, probably, a limited plebiscite would be more desirable. He added that, as there were legitimate apprehensions in the mind of India in regard to the security of the State, it should be easily possible for a brigade or so of Commonwealth troops to be placed there for security reasons till the plebiscite ended. Australia would be glad to provide such troops and will think this a service rendered to the cause of world peace. Some reference was also made to the heavy expenditure on defence of both India and Pakistan.

3. Mr Attlee then turned to me. I said that I was at least equally desirous of a settlement of the Kashmir question. This was to the advantage of both India and Pakistan, and we had made many attempts, but thus far without success. They show obviously that it was not quite so simple as it appeared on the surface, or otherwise it would have been settled long ago. No doubt, it would be settled sooner or later. I gave a very brief account of some of the difficulties and points that had arisen and added that two aspects were prominently before me. One was that no step should be taken which might lead to an upsetting of the somewhat unstable equilibrium that had been gradually established between India and Pakistan during these past few years. There was grave danger that if a wrong step was taken, it would rouse passions all over India and Pakistan, and raise new issues of vital importance. That would be a tragedy. The second point was that I could not deal with any proposal without reference to my colleagues in Delhi and Kashmir. So far as the Government of India was concerned, we had gone there on the invitation of not only the legally constituted government, but also of the largest popular party there. Our responsibility was confined to Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communications. For the rest, the State Government was responsible and we could not interfere with its discretion though, of course, we could advise them. It was neither possible nor desirable for us to come to any decision without the concurrence of the State Government. We could not bypass them and we did not want to do so.

4. The Prime Minister of Pakistan said that the State Government were just 'puppets' appointed by me and I could remove them or change them at any time. I took strong exception to this and told them something about the background in Kashmir and of the National Conference and Shaikh Abdullah, etc.

5. I had given a very brief resume of events in Kashmir during the last three years, finishing up with Dixon and his proposals. I pointed out that Dixon had, on the whole, thought that an overall plebiscite was not feasible and had, therefore, explored the possibility of a partial plebiscite. To the general principle of this I had agreed, subject, of course, to many other matters connected with it being considered and decided upon, but I made it clear that there was no point in discussing these matters until the principle was accepted by Pakistan. Mr Liaquat Ali Khan had indignantly repudiated it.



6. The Prime Minister of Pakistan thereupon said that there was no question of an overall plebiscite not being feasible. There might be some difficulties but, obviously, it could be done. I agreed that it could be done, though it might take time. The question of feasibility did not refer to the practical difficulty of having an electoral roll, etc., but, according to Dixon, to various other factors.<sup>4</sup> Some of these other factors were briefly referred to.

7. Mr Menzies stated that he had not been able to understand why the Government of the State should be pushed aside or suspended because of the plebiscite. It could very well continue, though matters connected with the plebiscite might be handed over to a Plebiscite Commissioner. Attlee agreed with this.

8. There was some reference to the ethnic and linguistic divisions of the State. I told them also that there was a basic difference between our approach and Pakistan's in regard to the two-nation theory and the insistence on religious difference coming into politics. While we had reluctantly accepted certain facts, we never accepted their theory, and we were not prepared to apply it to Kashmir in any event. That would be bad for Kashmir, but it would be worse still for India and Pakistan. It would go counter to the principles that governed us and might produce upheavals in India and Pakistan. We had only recently witnessed an upheaval of this kind in Bengal<sup>5</sup> which had with difficulty been controlled by the Agreement<sup>6</sup> between the two Prime Ministers.

9. Attlee pointed out rather warmly that past history did not quite fit in with what I had said and that, in fact, the division of India had largely been based on the religious basis. He did not like this religious basis at all, and he had tried to avoid it, but facts were too strong. Further, he said that ethnic and linguistic divisions were equally dangerous, and we in India were having to face this difficulty in various parts of the country. I said that we were not enamoured of ethnic or linguistic divisions, but, in the circumstances, we certainly thought that any religious approach to a political problem was highly dangerous and explosive. We had never accepted that principle, and we did not propose to do so in future. Right from the beginning of the Kashmir trouble, we had laid stress on this fact and informed the United Nations Commission repeatedly that this appeal to religion must be avoided. In spite

4. Dixon ruled out an overall plebiscite as, according to him, Kashmir was not a single economic, geographical, or demographical entity and any attempt to allocate the whole of it to either country would create serious problems of refugee movements and dislocation besides causing injury to the interests of the people, their sense of justice and to their ties with the place to which they belonged.

5. Communal riots in East Bengal in December 1949 led to mass exodus of people in the two Bengals.

6. The Agreement of 8 April 1950 between the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan.



of this, the Pakistan press was full of this religious appeal and calls for *jihad*.<sup>7</sup> If this was the kind of thing that was going to take place before and during a plebiscite, then there would be no plebiscite but civil upheaval, not only in Kashmir, but elsewhere in India and Pakistan.

10. Mr Menzies said that he quite agreed that religion should be kept out of the picture, and he had been much disturbed when he saw the Pakistan press in Karachi, which was writing most irresponsibly on this subject.<sup>8</sup>

11. Some further desultory conversation took place. Mr St Laurent of Canada, and Mr Holland of New Zealand took very little part in the conversations. Mr Senanayake was practically silent throughout.

12. Mr Attlee then referred to river waters in connection with Kashmir, and mentioned the International Commission set up by Canada and the United States. I mentioned that Mr St Laurent had drawn my attention to this last year and had stated subsequently that I would be perfectly agreeable to having some such Commission to consider river water problems as between India and Pakistan.

13. The Prime Minister of Pakistan, at one stage, referred to the ethnic divisions of Kashmir and said that, if necessary, a plebiscite could be held separately in these areas. At no time, however, did he accept the idea of a partial plebiscite. He insisted on an overall plebiscite for the State, though this might be taken separately in different areas, presumably to allow these areas to decide for themselves.

14. As Mr Menzies was not feeling too well, and probably had a temperature, the conversation ended rather suddenly at about 10.00 p.m. Mr Menzies concluded it by saying that we might perhaps think of the various suggestions made in the course of the conversation. These were, according to him, that, firstly, the State Government should not be touched, and should continue, except in regard to functions relating to the plebiscite; secondly, the Commonwealth might provide a 'Security Force' for Kashmir for the plebiscite period; and, thirdly, the plebiscite might be held in different areas.

7. In a speech published in *Dawn* on 6 December 1950, Abdur Rab Nishtar, Governor of Punjab (Pakistan), had said: "Pakistan was not only essential for the eight crores of its inhabitants but also beneficial for the Muslims living in Bharat... We want to see an immediate release of the forty lakhs of Muslims of Kashmir from the rule of the sword now rampant in that Muslim state."

8. When Menzies visited Karachi from 27 to 30 December 1950, *Dawn* in an editorial on 29 December 1950 wrote: "We must stand steadfast on our convictions and learn to reconcile our Islamic principles with our loyalties as an Asian nation...at the same time resisting any browbeating by either Red or White. Then we are sure not only to emerge as a nation respected by all, but by the grace of God Kashmir will be ours."

15. In the course of the conversation, no reference was made, either by Mr Liaquat Ali Khan or by me, to the proposal about a Commonwealth Force being sent to Kashmir.

16. There was no mention of these talks being resumed.<sup>9</sup>

9. After informal meetings of seven Prime Ministers from 12 to 14 January 1951, it was announced that their united efforts had not succeeded in bringing about a settlement of the Kashmir dispute.

## 18. To S.M. Abdullah<sup>1</sup>

London

9th January, 1951

My dear Shaikh Saheb,

Your letter of the 4th January has reached me here today.

You have taken the trouble to write at length about various legal and other matters. I do not propose to deal with these. I have no time here to go into all this, nor have I the inclination to do so. You will, no doubt, discuss these with our friends in Delhi.

All I wish to say here is that I am not convinced by your argument, and I think much that you have written, though, no doubt, relevant, has no great bearing on what I said or wrote to you. I have no doubt that the will of the Kashmir people must prevail in regard to every matter, and it is they who will decide ultimately every question affecting the State. What I had suggested was rather a simple issue, that in the proclamation for a constituent assembly, certain words and statements should not be used, because they would come into conflict with certain assurances that we had given and because they were totally unnecessary, unless the object was to have that conflict. This matter, as all matters, has to be considered in its totality of circumstances and the general effect produced. It was keeping all this in view that I ventured to offer you my advice. It would serve little purpose for me to argue.

You may have seen that Liaquat Ali Khan made a big fuss about coming here. Ultimately he came here. We had made it perfectly clear that the Kashmir issue must not be raised at the Prime Ministers' Conference. This evening we had an informal talk about this. The Prime Ministers of the U.K., Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Ceylon were present and, of course, Liaquat Ali Khan and myself. Our conversation was rather desultory, and did not lead to anything. I do not think there will be any further conversations on this subject,

1. J.N. Collection.



though I am not sure. I have written more fully about these conversations to Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal

## 19. The Future of Kashmir<sup>1</sup>

Jawaharlal Nehru: We have always held that the Kashmir issue should be decided by a referendum or plebiscite. In fact, this was our proposal long before Pakistan came into the picture and long before the United Nations came into the picture.

I cannot say very much on Kashmir except that at the Commonwealth Conference we had fairly full talks. Some matters were clarified but it would not be possible to say that we have come to any final agreement. Of course, it must be remembered that we have reached a great deal of agreement already.

What I mean is that many basic features have been thrashed out. We all agreed that it is the people of Kashmir who must decide for themselves about their future externally or internally. It is an obvious fact that even without our agreement no country is going to hold on to Kashmir against the will of the Kashmiris.

India's intervention in Kashmir was after an invitation and at the instance both of the Government of Kashmir and the largest political national party there. If we were told to go away we would go away.

We came to an agreement with them that they join the Indian Union and that we would be responsible for their defence and foreign affairs. For the rest, they were responsible for their own affairs.

We cannot interfere in the internal management. We can advise them, we can help them in various ways, but our chief function under the text of the agreement is the defence of Kashmir against external invasion.

Of course, we can, in practice, denounce that agreement and say we shall not defend them in future, but we cannot interfere internally except by advice.

Therefore, any agreement, from the very nature of things, must come from the people of Kashmir or their representatives and not be imposed upon them by us or anyone else.

1. Remarks at a press conference, London, 16 January 1951. From the *National Herald*, 17 January 1951.



Great difficulties in regard to Kashmir have arisen from the almost three and a half years of invasion and fighting. If the question had been raised previously, about the time of Partition, then whatever the decision had been it would have been accepted all round, whether they liked it or not.

The fact which must be borne in mind is that no step should be taken which might create greater difficulties in a somewhat unstable position—not only difficulties in Kashmir but in regard to Pakistan and India and their relations with each other.

There have been basic differences in approach as between Pakistan and India to the Kashmir problem. The Pakistan approach has been rather on a religious plane.

In agreeing to Partition, we had to accept certain facts of popular feeling, but India has never accepted the religious approach as the right one. India did not accept it for the obvious reason, that if she once accepted nationality going by religion, it would have had far-reaching consequences.

If nationality goes by religion then what about the forty million Muslims who still live in India or the fifteen million Hindus who live in Pakistan?

Such an approach will have extraordinary results. Such minorities may become second-class citizens and almost half-aliens. We can go on assuring them 'yes, you have rights', but they feel they have no rights. Such people could never have the security of being good nationals of their country.

At the time of Partition what we agreed to was that certain areas could vote themselves out. It may be that the decision to vote was influenced by religious considerations. But we could not accept what was called the two-nation theory.

India has a multitude of religions. Apart from Hindus, there are a large number of Christians, plenty of Jews, Buddhists and all kind of sects. Being a country of many religions, India could only carry on as a secular State with full freedom to all religions and without making any one religion dominant.

Kashmir brings up this particular problem: Are we to treat Kashmir on a religious basis as Pakistan suggests or on a purely political and economic basis? We have always, right from the beginning, accepted the idea of the Kashmir people deciding their fate by referendum or plebiscite. It was our proposal to the people of Kashmir and subsequently it was referred to the United Nations. In making that proposal we have made it clear that this matter should be treated on the political and economic plane, and if religious questions were introduced in Kashmir, they would have repercussions in Pakistan and India with their vast minorities.

It was this danger of upsetting the equilibrium which has been established in India and Pakistan which is the reason for our proceeding with caution. Conditions in India and Pakistan on this issue are now much better than in the

past. We have settled down. We do not wish anything to happen which might unsettle the settling down process.

Ultimately, the final decision of settlement, which must come, has first of all to be made basically by the people of Kashmir and secondly as between India and Pakistan directly. That will be a suitable settlement. Any imposed settlement will give rise to a lot of trouble.

The Commonwealth Prime Ministers discussed one or two important aspects. Suggestions made were not exactly new but just different aspects of old suggestions. One or two are worthy of further consideration.

The Partition of India has caused very deep wounds. These are being gradually healed. Undoubtedly, the healing process would have continued but for Kashmir, and the process stopped when war propaganda in regard to Kashmir was indulged in. Talk of war also makes a solution more difficult.

Talk of "holy war" has produced an opposite reaction on the other side and the question of a peaceful solution and a plebiscite has become more distant. If all war propaganda could be completely stopped, I am sure, we should be much nearer a solution, which must be made by the people of Kashmir.

Question: Do you intend to go to Moscow or Peking?

JN: No, there is no present intention. As I stated once in Delhi, if the necessity arose and I felt it would serve a useful purpose, I would travel to the ends of the earth.<sup>2</sup>

Q: Will the friendship between India and China constitute a stabilising factor in Asia and also form a counterweight against Soviet influence in South-East Asia?

JN: All friendships are stabilising factors, that is, if those friendships are not aimed at a lack of friendship with others.

It is a rather interesting historical perspective if one looks at the past 1,500 years of the history of South-East Asia which is influenced very greatly by India and China in various cultural, political and other ways. Every country in South-East Asia has the impress of China as well as India.

I am not aware of any Soviet influence in South-East Asia. I am aware of certain communist movements in these countries.

Q: What is your view on the prospects of a peaceful settlements in Korea?

2. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 14 Part II, p. 325.



JN: If you look at the resolutions of the Prime Ministers' Conference as well as the 'principles' stated by the three-man committee set up by the Political Committee of the United Nations,<sup>3</sup> you will find various points emerging.

One important point is that it has been agreed that the four Powers specially concerned, Britain, the United States, the Soviet Union and China, should settle East Asian problems. That means, curiously enough, that while we have been discussing the recognition of the new China and the entry of the People's Government into the United Nations, something much bigger has been recognized and that is that the new China is a Great Power to be dealt with on terms of equality by the other Powers. That is a much bigger thing than entry into the United Nations.

That is a mere recognition of fact, and legal questions, likes or dislikes, do not enter. The basic factor is that a great new Power has arisen in the Far East and thereby it has upset the previous equilibrium. The fact of not recognizing it does not make it any the less a fact. Many difficulties which have arisen are due to this non-recognition of facts. The entry of China into the United Nations would simply be a recognition of this new fact.

International obligations in relation to Formosa mean settlement under the terms of the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations. Therefore, the Conference had admitted one of the claims of the Chinese Government in regard to Formosa. It has not been said perhaps as precisely as it should have been but the language is clear enough.

Everybody agrees that Korea should be unified.

When the implications of this resolution are clearly understood, it will go a considerable way towards a settlement of the East Asian problems. Once one gets moving, it is legitimate to think that avenues will open out and some settlement will result. That settlement will not be a complete settlement because other problems may arise. What we should aim at is not a legal settlement but rather the ending of this world-wide tension that exists.

Q: Can the four-Power talks on East Asian problems suggested by the Commonwealth be enlarged by the addition of other countries such as India and France?

JN: It is open to the four parties.

Stress has been laid, however, on the fact that at this stage the conference should be a small one. So far as India is concerned, we have absolutely no desire to push ourselves into that conference or any other. It has been India's misfortune to be pushed on to various committees and commissions despite our desire to keep out. If we can be helpful, we will act up to our

3. See *post*, Section 13.



responsibilities, but we have no desire to go there. The conference can be enlarged eventually. You cannot leave the fate of the world to those four countries.

Q: Did the Commonwealth Conference consider a joint military defence plan?

JN: The Conference had not considered a joint military defence plan at all. The countries concerned with the Atlantic Pact might have done.

The Conference considered facts placed before it and each country decided for itself.

As regards Indian foreign policy, continuing the struggle against colonialism in Asia and Africa is not only an idealistic aspiration but has become essential in order to remove one of the potent causes of trouble in the world. A main point in India's foreign policy is to develop friendly relations with as many countries as possible, avoiding ideological conflict.

We do not agree with the policy of many countries, but we do not think it serves any purpose to go on attacking their policies. There is too great a tendency in the world today to condemn others. Maybe there is reason, but it does not help.

Q: Can you tell us about events in Tibet?

JN: I do not think there is any practical feasibility of a military threat to India across the Himalayas. We do not propose to interfere. Indeed, we cannot.

The general policy of India towards Indo-China is that the country should be free from any external control. It will not settle down until that comes about. Because of this policy, India has not recognized either of the two governments which have been functioning there. We have not interfered in any way. The sooner basic facts are realised the better.

Q: What is the Indian Government's attitude towards Hong Kong?

JN: The question never came before the Commonwealth Conference. Such questions never do.

Hong Kong, like Indo-China, is a matter that should be settled with the people concerned.

As regards India's food situation, six months ago the situation was satisfactory; but during the last few months unprecedented calamities, such as floods, drought, crops destroyed by locusts and the catastrophe caused by earthquakes in Assam, have created difficulties; surplus provinces are converted into deficit ones and the net result is that the country is faced with an all-round deficit of five or six million tons of foodgrains. I am confident that the

country's food problem will be solved during the next five or six years mainly as a result of the food production drive and the river valley schemes which are being undertaken. The main question is tiding over the next two or three years.

India has received foodgrains from abroad, including such countries as Thailand and China, and the Government of India are negotiating for food with other countries. We are always prepared to accept food from wherever we can get.

On the subject of Anglo-Egyptian relations, I would like to say that in India we are not fully acquainted with all aspects of the dispute. But India in principle is opposed to any form of colonialism.

This problem is viewed by the West in relation to defence and security in the context of the present international situation. But I hope the question of Anglo-Egyptian relations, like all other issues, will be solved by peaceful negotiations and mutual goodwill.

## 20. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram 43 of January 23rd,<sup>2</sup> Kashmir. During informal talks in London I mentioned partial plebiscite as suggested by Dixon. I added that we had been prepared to consider it provided Pakistan accepted the principle. Pakistan had rejected it. Liaquat Ali thereupon brushed aside the whole idea of partial plebiscite. Nothing more was said about it. The three proposals made about stationing forces in Kashmir were thus not related to partial plebiscite but to some form of overall plebiscite which might, however, be taken areawise.

I rejected proposal for Commonwealth forces or Indo-Pak forces. Regarding local forces recruited by Plebiscite Administrator, I did not reject it but said that it raised complicated issues which had to be considered in view of our responsibility for defence of Kashmir.

Our previous suggestion of mediation by President and other Members should not be put forward. As for sub-committee of non-permanent Members of Security Council, we think this will serve no useful purpose, more especially after recent London talks.

1. New Delhi, 24 January 1951. J.N. Collection.

2. Rau sought fresh instructions in light of the informal Commonwealth talks held in London as he expected discussion on Kashmir in the Security Council to take place any day.



Your line of argument in paragraph 9<sup>3</sup> is sound, but nothing should be said to indicate that Pakistan has a right to keep what she holds now.

On the whole, there appears to be no other course except to accept Dixon's recommendation that case may be referred back to parties. In view of international situation also this would be proper course. As for time-limit the longer the period the better. We would prefer no time-limit.

3. Rau suggested as an argument that in spite of India's offer of plebiscite in 1947 Pakistan had tried to settle the Kashmir issue by force and captured half of the State and was now planning to capture the rest of it by other means; and this was one reason why India had to reject various proposals naturally welcome to Pakistan.

## 21. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram No. 7742 of 25th January.<sup>2</sup> Kashmir.

Your suggestion is full of difficulties. In any event matter has to be fully discussed with Kashmir Government. I think that for the present the right course is for us to follow Dixon's recommendation to Security Council, that is, matter to be left to parties themselves.

I might add that we have withdrawn considerable forces from Kashmir already and are prepared to reduce our forces there to the very minimum if Pakistan also withdraws. In fact a small force situated on various strategic points can conceivably have no effect on plebiscite.

Pakistan press continues to shout wildly for war.<sup>3</sup> This kind of the threat makes it even more difficult for us to agree to any total withdrawal....

1. New Delhi, 28 January 1951. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L. Extracts.
2. Menon wrote that criticism of India's rejecting proposal for stationing Commonwealth troops in Kashmir could be countered by stipulating that troops be stationed only on the borders of both countries adjoining borders of Kashmir so as to prevent any tribal invasion of the State. Posting troops on borders would also obviate constitutional and political difficulties. After withdrawal of Indian and Pakistan forces, the internal security of the State should be left to Kashmir forces.
3. For example, *Dawn* in an editorial on 31 December 1950 on Kashmir stated that "the four million people groaning under the heels of alien tyrants could not forget the Kashmir tragedy. We stand pledged to liberate them and liberate them we must."



## 22. To the Aga Khan<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

February 1, 1951

My dear Aga Khan,

Your letter of the 25th January<sup>2</sup> from Rangoon was delivered to me today after my return to Delhi.

I appreciate what you say in regard to Kashmir and the fears that may be entertained. As you must know, this question of Kashmir has aroused a great deal of passion and prejudice both in India and Pakistan. There is one difference however: on the Pakistan side every effort is being made to keep up this fear and passion at fever heat. In India we have tried to keep it down and to treat the matter as calmly as possible. Nevertheless, a good deal of passion remains, though it is not quite so obvious in public statements.

The question you have raised about the rivers flowing from Kashmir Rangoon was delivered to me today after my return to Delhi.

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## 24. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

We have received draft resolution<sup>2</sup> on Kashmir sponsored by United Kingdom and U.S.A. in Security Council. We shall await full report of Security Council meeting today<sup>3</sup> before sending instructions to Rau. Meanwhile I might inform you that we consider the resolution wholly misconceived, objectionable and totally unacceptable. We do not propose to move any amendment to it or to ask Rau to make a lengthy reply. We are prepared for all consequences of our rejecting it even if it is passed. This is for your personal information. In view of the fact that U.K. Government has made no reference to us about this resolution which has been discussed by them and U.S.A. for several weeks past we do not propose to say anything to the U.K. about it.

1. New Delhi, 21 February 1951. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. The salient features of the draft were: (1) appointment of a U.N. Representative in succession to Dixon to effect demilitarisation of the State on the basis of Dixon proposals and to prepare an agreed scheme for holding a plebiscite in consultation with the Governments of India and Pakistan; (2) supervision of exercise of functions of the Jammu and Kashmir Government; (3) forces for facilitating demilitarisation and holding of plebiscite to be either provided by U.N. members or raised locally. It also said that the proposed constituent assembly of Jammu and Kashmir could not be a satisfactory forum for expression of the will of the people in place of a plebiscite under U.N. auspices.
3. The Anglo-U.S. resolution on Kashmir was moved in the Security Council by the British delegate on 21 February and the Council was then adjourned until 1 March 1951.

## 25. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

Following are our comments on U.K.-U.S.A. resolution on Kashmir. Your reply should state our stand in broad terms on lines indicated below and anything in the nature of an elaborate statement should be avoided.

2. We are wholly unable to accept resolution. We do not propose to move any amendments to it because we disagree entirely with approach of this resolution which is contrary in many respects to decision previously taken by United Nations Commission with the agreement of parties and to recommendations made by Dixon. Some parts of previous resolutions have been picked out leaving out important parts to which we have throughout

1. New Delhi, 23 February 1951. Copy in V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.



attached great importance and which were specifically accepted by Commission. We are not prepared to go back on all that has been done by the Commission and subsequently with our agreement. Right from the beginning we have ourselves insisted that the future of the State should be decided in accordance with the wishes of the people of the State. But we have stated clearly and repeatedly the only conditions which in our opinion should govern a plebiscite. Most of these conditions were accepted by the Commission.

3. In the agreed resolutions of United Nations Commission<sup>2</sup> it was stated that Pakistan must withdraw all her forces, regular and irregular, and that India would thereupon withdraw the bulk of her forces from Kashmir. At no time was it envisaged that India should withdraw her forces completely from the State because her right and obligation for the defence of the State was acknowledged. We made it further clear in our acceptance of UNCIP resolution that it was essential that 'Azad Kashmir' forces should be disbanded and disarmed and that we would reduce our forces to the minimum necessary to ensure security of State. The Commission recognised that a new situation had arisen because of the entry of Pakistani forces in Kashmir State and Dixon stated clearly that this was aggression. India cannot therefore accept a parity of treatment in this matter or any other with the aggressor. More especially she cannot take the risk of a repetition of what occurred in October 1947.

4. The word "demilitarisation" was first used by McNaughton. We have never accepted its practical interpretation as given subsequently. As a matter of fact even though Pakistan has not withdrawn her armed forces from State territory as recommended by United Nations Commission, we have considerably reduced our forces in the State. We are prepared to continue this withdrawal if Pakistan will remove her troops from the State completely. Only the minimum number of troops necessary for security purposes will be stationed at points necessary to prevent armed aggression, raids or infiltration of undesirable elements. We are wholly unable to see how this can be regarded as a threat to the fairness of a plebiscite. We are not prepared to leave this matter to anyone else's discretion or decision.

5. We are also wholly unable to accept any entry of foreign troops in the State or in any other part of India.

6. We cannot also accept any supersession of the State Government or any interference with its functions apart from the conduct of the plebiscite. It was clearly stated on behalf of the Commission that the Plebiscite Administrator "could be expected to act reasonably and that the Commission did not intend that he should usurp the functions of the State in the field of normal administration and law and order. His functions and powers would be limited

2. UNCIP resolutions of 13 August 1948 and 5 January 1949.

to ensure that the plebiscite was free and impartial.”<sup>3</sup> The sovereignty of the entire State must necessarily rest with the State Government and because of this the Plebiscite Administrator himself should be formally appointed by the State Government. All this has been recognised by the Commission.<sup>4</sup>

7. Both as regards demilitarisation and other measures resolution seems to assume that views and feelings of the lawful Government of Jammu and Kashmir either count for little or can be overridden by the Security Council or the Government of India at will. Neither assumption is correct. Insofar as the Government of India are concerned their authority extend only to certain subjects, viz., External Affairs, Defence and Communications, in respect of which the State has acceded to India and they have no authority otherwise to

We are unable to accept any decision which may be sought to be imposed upon us without our consent. We are bound in honour to carry out our obligations and to adhere to the pledge we have given to the Government and people of Kashmir.

## 26. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

Kashmir Resolution. We have already indicated to you quite clearly our strong reaction to U.K.-U.S. resolution. We cannot possibly accept this new approach and we are not prepared to discuss minor variations of it. It is desirable that you should not enter into long arguments. Privately you can make it perfectly clear that on no account whatever are we prepared to act on lines indicated by that resolution.

We have been trying our utmost in regard to other matters to come to agreement with Pakistan but have been repeatedly thwarted. Regarding trade we are likely very soon to sign agreement with Pakistan.<sup>2</sup> This involves considerable sacrifice on our part but because of larger issues we are accepting this.

1. New Delhi, 24 February 1951. J.N. Collection.
2. A new agreement signed on 25 February and which was to remain in force till 30 June 1952 provided for export of coal, iron, steel, cement, timber, edible oil, yarn, cloth and jute manufactures from India to Pakistan and import of raw jute, cotton, rice, flour, vegetables, etc., from Pakistan to India. Transactions were to take place on the par value of 100 Pakistani rupees for 144 Indian rupees.

## 27. To V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 24, 1951

My dear Krishna,

I have had your intriguing telegram<sup>2</sup> about the background of the Kashmir resolution in the Security Council. I am looking forward to your next message. I must confess that this whole business of cooking this resolution for some weeks in secret and then suddenly throwing it at us is very odd. Any person,

1. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L. Extracts.
2. Menon cabled Rau on 23 February 1951 to await his appreciation of likely factors behind the move.



with a normal degree of intelligence, would have known that such a resolution must be objected to strongly by us. Almost in every single point it goes against what we have laid stress on throughout these three years. Why then was this procedure adopted? Did they think that we would get frightened by a joint front against us of the U.K., U.S.A. and others in the Security Council, or did they believe that we would accept it and wanted to put us in a difficult position and thus try to blunt the edge of our Far Eastern policy?

I can think of no other reason. Whichever of these is true, it should have been realised that the result anyhow is one of deep suspicion of the U.K.'s motives. The U.S.A. has been and is rather hysterical and one can expect almost anything from it. But the U.K. was supposed to possess more balance and foresight. This resolution displays neither.

In any event, as I have made it quite clear to Rau and to you, we are in no mood at all to submit to this kind of dictation and we shall accept whatever consequences that might flow from our rejection of the U.K. and U.S.A. approach. Pakistan will of course accept it after pretending to criticise it.<sup>3</sup>

Meanwhile we have gone ahead with our trade agreement with Pakistan and it is quite possible that it might be signed today or tomorrow. A resumption of trade will of course benefit both countries, but the fact that we recognise the exchange value of the Pakistan rupee will certainly come as a shock to a large number of persons here and Pakistan will crow over it as a victory. It was quite possible that we might not have entered into this agreement because of various considerations and the sacrifice involved in some matters. But, largely because of wider considerations and our desire to break this impasse with Pakistan, we agreed to this arrangement.

3. On 6 March 1951, Zafrullah Khan advocated appointment by the Security Council of "an outstanding personality of high repute" with full powers to resolve the Kashmir question. On 2 April, Pakistan accepted the resolution which was adopted by the Council in a revised form on 30 March 1951.

## 28. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram 106 of February 23rd.<sup>2</sup> We are convinced that U.K.-U.S. resolution is not *bona fide* attempt at solution and is intended to embarrass us

1. New Delhi, 25 February 1951. J.N. Collection.
2. Rau, analysing the Anglo-U.S. resolution, stated that the best way of counteracting the mischief contained in it would be to take a stand on the lines of Nehru's telegram of 23 February, that subject to reservations India would not be called upon to consider anything contrary to previous resolutions and assurances.

or to entangle us in further commitments, explicit or implied. We have already made enough commitments in the past in this way and we should be very careful. We cannot therefore accept the resolution even with reservations. Our rejection must be complete but you can point out that in rejecting, it is not we who are going back on any of our previous commitments but the sponsors of the resolution who are running away from U.N. and other commitments to India. We take strong objection to this new approach which is totally opposed to past three years' activities of U.N. Commission and others and we think this is neither fair nor just. Therefore we are not prepared to consider this approach or move any amendments to it. Would again suggest that you should not enter into any detailed analysis of resolution in your speech but draw attention to some salient factors which are contrary to much that has gone before and to our firm policy which we have repeated so often. We are not prepared anyhow to give up major principles for which we stand.

Would like you to send us your estimate of position in Security Council. Presumably most countries would vote against us and for the resolution. What will be attitude of Soviet and Yugoslavia?<sup>3</sup> You can tell all of them privately about our firm opposition to this resolution.

3. The Security Council adopted the Anglo-U.S. resolution in a revised form on 30 March 1951 with Britain, the United States, France, China, the Netherlands, Turkey, Brazil and Ecuador voting in favour, and India, U.S.S.R., and Yugoslavia abstaining.

## 29. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram 107 dated 24th February<sup>2</sup> must have crossed my No. 21357 of 25th. We have given full consideration to approach suggested by you and rejected it in favour of instructions already sent. We are entirely opposed to acceptance of resolution with reservations as suggested by you. This will not prevent our critics from regarding our attitude as one of rejection and will not profit us in any other way. We object to resolution not only because of its

1. New Delhi, 26 February 1951. J.N. Collection.
2. Rau cabled that acceptance of the Anglo-U.S. resolution subject to reservations would not only sterilise it but put India in a strong moral and tactical position and show that she stood firmly by her commitments and also enable her to insist on the Security Council and its agencies honouring their past resolutions and assurances.

repudiation of previous commitments but also to its entire spirit. It appears to us to be a deliberate attempt to injure us in Kashmir and to discredit our wider policies. The only self-respecting reaction to such a resolution is to say that it ignores past commitments and is therefore totally unacceptable. We want the sponsors of resolution and others to realise how strongly we feel about it and how impossible it is for us to submit to such tactics. If this comes as a shock to them, we do not mind. The resolution may be passed by Security Council, but even so we will not accept it, whatever consequences may follow. We are not prepared to get involved in fresh endless discussions over matters like demilitarisation and measure of supervision to be exercised over Jammu and Kashmir Government. These have been discussed threadbare and our attitude made clear beyond possibility of mistake, as also beyond possibility of modification, so far as we are concerned. Therefore I would repeat that any elaborate analysis of resolution or suggestion that we would be prepared to consider modified versions of it must be avoided. The sponsors must be made to realise that if they really desire a settlement then their approach will have to be fundamentally different. I want you to appreciate how strongly we feel on this subject and to reflect this strong attitude of ours in the Security Council.<sup>3</sup>

3. B.N. Rau announced India's inability to accept the resolution in the Security Council on 1 March 1951 and spoke on the lines outlined in Nehru's telegram of 23 February (see *ante*, pp. 294-297).



RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN



## 1. To Liaquat Ali Khan<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
October 27, 1950

My dear Nawabzada,

I have received your three letters dated respectively the 18th, the 21st and 23rd October. The first deals with the disputes relating to canal waters and evacuee property, the other two with the proposals for a no-war declaration and the connected problem of the settlement of all disputes between our two Governments, present as well as future. I have also seen an official note dated the 18th October<sup>2</sup> addressed to the Government of India by your Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Commonwealth Relations through our High Commission in Pakistan.

2. I have read all these communications with great care. Since the disputes relating to canal waters and evacuee property are part of the issues now outstanding between India and Pakistan, and the specific method of solving them that I have suggested is susceptible, in our view, of extension to the settlement of other disputes of a like nature, it seems reasonable to treat them as part of the general problem. I have, therefore, decided to deal with your three letters together.

3. To take up, first, the question of a no-war declaration and the general problem of settling present and future disputes between our two countries. You will forgive me if I say that I have been disappointed by what you have written on the subject.<sup>3</sup> If I may ask: Is it not our aim to avoid war between our two countries in any circumstances, and to resolve all our disputes by peaceful methods alone? I do not wish to repeat the arguments that I have put forward in my previous letters. You will remember that the no-war declaration suggested by me specifically mentions arbitration by special agency set up by mutual agreement or by agreed reference to some international body recognised by both of us. There is no question, therefore, of our ruling out arbitration, as

1. J.N. Collection.

2. It requested for a draft of the "convention" governing the composition, the authority, the rules of decision and procedure and other details of the *ad hoc* court proposed by India for adjudication of the canal waters and evacuee property disputes.

3. In his letter of 23 October, Liaquat Ali charged that "every suggestion for demilitarization made by any agency of the U.N. has been unacceptable to you. Our personal discussions have also led to no results." He asked how a solution could be reached, "if no peaceful method of settlement, neither direct negotiation nor mediation nor arbitration by organs of the U.N., are acceptable to you", and wrote that if India agreed to demilitarization as per the U.N. resolutions, "it would be a far more powerful contribution to peace and friendship between India and Pakistan than any no-war declaration."



you seem to suggest.<sup>4</sup> What we pointed out was that disputes between nations are of many different kinds and it is not possible to devise a uniform method of dealing with all kinds of disputes, whatever their nature. In some cases and at some stage arbitration may be desirable, whether by a mutually agreed special agency or by an international body that both India and Pakistan recognise. Disputes may or may not be justiciable. Some kinds of political disputes are obviously not justiciable, nor can all be referred to arbitration.

4. To the foregoing, I added a corollary in my letter to you of the 19th October.<sup>5</sup> I said that I had stated on previous occasions, and repeated at a recent press conference,<sup>6</sup> that India would not resort to war in Kashmir unless we were attacked. This is an unequivocal statement by which we stand regardless of what Pakistan may say. I had asked you to make a similar statement on behalf of Pakistan as this would go far to remove the fears and tension from which our countries suffer. I had brought this matter to your notice more especially because the Pakistan press and the statements of many prominent persons in Pakistan have been full of appeals for war against India for many months past. I had hoped that you would condemn this kind of talk in emphatic terms and make a declaration similar to mine. That you have not done so is likely to encourage the inference that there is a possibility of Pakistan attacking India, even though there might be no attack by India on Pakistan. I can only regard this as unfortunate.

5. In regard to two of the major disputes between our two countries, viz., canal waters and evacuee property, negotiations over a protracted period failed to produce any result. We, therefore, suggested<sup>7</sup> immediate reference to a tribunal of the highest standing, consisting of two judges from India and two judges from Pakistan. There was no question of delay in this.

6. You ask me to send a draft of the convention governing the composition, the authority, the rules of decision and procedure, etc., of this tribunal which we have suggested. I am afraid I have not quite followed what you mean by a convention. Clearly there must be agreement between us regarding the composition of the tribunal, its terms of reference and powers. The composition has already been dealt with. As regards the tribunal's powers, I think we should lay it down that it should have final authority to deal with the matters referred to it. The judges can decide unanimously or by majority. They will have all

4. Liaquat Ali in response to Nehru's letter of 8 October 1950 (see *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 322-326) wrote, "You apparently feel that arbitration by an independent tribunal is incompatible with the dignity of a sovereign State."

5. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 326-327.

6. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 415-424.

7. On 15 September 1950.

the powers of superior courts in regard to summoning of witnesses, etc. They will settle their procedure and method of working, as such tribunals do. We must invest the tribunal with the highest authority and not make it feel that it is just a stepping stone to something else. We must agree to abide by its decision in all matters referred to it.

7. As to what should happen if, unfortunately, there is an equal division of opinion among the judges, our view is that the two Governments must first consider those parts of the disputes which have not been finally decided and try to settle them themselves or, failing that, resort to arbitration or adjudication either by a mutually agreed special agency or an international organisation recognised by both Governments. Once this principle is accepted, the terms of reference can be settled between the two Governments acting in consultation. The procedure, to my mind, is quite simple and straightforward.

8. We have suggested that this tribunal might also deal with other justiciable matters that might be referred to it, now or later. When the moment so to enlarge its functions comes, we can draw up an appropriate convention or agreement.

9. I pointed out in my previous letters how such a tribunal was preferable to any foreign court or tribunal.<sup>8</sup> That did not mean that we should not refer any particular matter or any remaining points of dispute to the International Court of Justice or any other authority that we select, if the necessity for this arises.

10. Before concluding, I should like to refer to certain points relating to the canal waters dispute which you have mentioned in your letter of the 18th instant.<sup>9</sup> I am surprised at your statement that supplies of water to Pakistan were not restored until after Pakistan's signatures were affixed to the Agreement of May 4, 1948. This is a simple question of fact, which can easily be verified. We sent you a telegram on the 29th April 1948,<sup>10</sup> in which it was stated that orders were being issued immediately for resumption of water supply from the Upper Bari Doab and Dipalpur canals. On the 1st of May you were good enough to acknowledge this telegram. Orders to renew the supply of water were issued immediately and renewal of supply actually took place on the 3rd May; the slight delay between the order to renew supplies and the actual renewal

8. On 18 October 1950, Liaquat Ali had asked for a draft agreement on the tribunal proposed by India as "it will assist us greatly in weighing the relative merits of such an *ad hoc* tribunal with those of the International Court of Justice."

9. Liaquat Ali reiterated that the Agreement of 4 May 1948 "was in no sense a voluntary one for Pakistan. Contrary to your recollection and indeed to the recitals in that instrument, supplies of water vital to Pakistan were not restored until after Pakistan's signatures were affixed."

10. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 6, pp. 62-63.



was unavoidable as the authorities concerned required a little time to carry out the orders. The agreement was signed on the 4th May evening. Perhaps I may claim to speak with some authority on this subject, because I was present at that Conference. Paragraph 2 of the Agreement itself shows that the East Punjab Government had revived the flow of water into these canals before the Agreement on 4th May was signed. Moreover, Pakistan's representatives, who included Mr Ghulam Mohammad and the High Commissioner for Pakistan in India as well as a Minister of the West Punjab Government, can testify to the fact. There was no question of coercion about this Agreement. Indeed, it was one of the happiest agreements arrived at in a friendly, cooperative atmosphere and no one then, or for long afterwards, ever raised the complaint which has recently been made on behalf of Pakistan.

11. The second paragraph in your letter of the 18th October is not quite correct and raises certain controversial issues about which we have had a lengthy correspondence in the past.<sup>11</sup> Our position is that we shall continue the supply of water to the two canals, until the dispute is settled, in accordance with the Agreement of the 4th May 1948. I sincerely hope that this dispute will be expeditiously settled; indeed, I am confident that if we set up quickly the tribunal that we have proposed, a satisfactory settlement will soon be reached. I regret, however, that I cannot undertake to stop the new irrigation projects that we now have in hand.

12. You refer to a commission of engineers.<sup>12</sup> It has been and is our view that no proper consideration of the canal waters question can take place without a technical survey carried out by engineers. For this reason, we have been pressing for such a technical survey. This was not meant to delay matters but to expedite them. In view, however, of your Government's attitude in regard to this matter, we have expressed our willingness to refer the canal waters issue at once to the *ad hoc* tribunal we have suggested. If your Government agrees, we can appoint the tribunal as well as the commission of engineers. Alternatively, we can go ahead with the tribunal, and leave it to that body to appoint the commission of engineers.

13. As I have written to you previously, we cannot consider the Kashmir issue in this connection. I shall always be glad to discuss that with you separately.

14. To conclude, the position seems to be this. If you agree to the no-war declaration that we have suggested, we can go ahead with it. If you do not

11. Liaquat Ali interpreted the note of the Government of India of 15 September 1950 to mean that "Pakistan will receive without diminution its pre-Partition supplies until other allocations are in the future adjudicated or agreed to." He also expressed concern at India's plans for irrigation projects at Bhakra and Nangal.

12. Liaquat Ali wrote that "this feature must not be permitted to delay the adjudication of the underlying issues."



agree, then the matter will have to be dropped for the present, much though I should regret this. In any event, there appears to be no reason whatever why we should not immediately agree to the constitution of a tribunal, on the lines indicated, for the final settlement of the evacuee property and canal waters disputes. Both are urgent and the procedure suggested by us for getting them out of the way is relatively simple. I would, therefore, beg of you to consider them independently and reach a decision.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 2. To B.C. Roy<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
2 November 1950

My dear Bidhan,

I have been receiving some reports about the district of Nadia. These reports state that large numbers of Muslims who have come back are not getting back their homes or their lands. There are not even any camps for them. Further that the President of the District Congress Committee, accompanied by the District Magistrate, Nadia, toured the district and delivered exciting speeches against the Muslims who had come back or who had been dispossessed of their lands and had yet not gone to Pakistan.

It is said that on the 2nd October, immediately after a speech by the President of the District Congress Committee at Dihata P.S., the Hindu refugees attacked the Muslims of Jehadpur village, belaboured them and forcibly took possession of their cows and bullocks.

It is reported that the local Hindus want the Muslim cultivators to be taken back and settled. But the District Magistrate and the President of the District Congress Committee are not in favour of this.

I shall be grateful if you could kindly have an enquiry made into this matter, as this, if correct, is clearly against our policy and our Agreement.

Yours,  
Jawahar

### 3. Declarations of Evacuee Property<sup>1</sup>

I have no recollection of any talk with Khwaja Shahabuddin. I think I did meet him<sup>2</sup> and I must have had some rather casual talk, in the course of which we might have mentioned that it was desirable to put an end to the issue of fresh notices under the evacuee property provisions.

2. This matter was first discussed by me with the Prime Minister of Pakistan in April 1950, at the time of the Indo-Pakistan Agreement.<sup>3</sup> He suggested then that we should fix a date, and the date suggested was April 8th, after which no property should be declared evacuee property. At the most, pending cases should continue. I said I liked the idea and we might consider it further and work it out. I then further discussed it with him during my visit to Karachi at the end of April.<sup>4</sup> We did not make any great progress except that the idea was again approved in principle. I think something was said then, or perhaps later, that pending further discussions we might tone down our activities in regard to evacuee property. As a matter of fact, I wrote to the Rehabilitation Ministry at the time<sup>5</sup> and told them of this and even suggested, I think, that they might go very slow, as it was probable that we might put an end to this whole business soon. I might have given some such idea to Khwaja Shahabuddin. I could not have told him that I had issued any orders not to issue any fresh notices. Undoubtedly, there was some intention of keeping matters pending, as some kind of an agreement on the subject was expected soon.

3. The record of the meeting of June 27th,<sup>6</sup> which says that the proposal of fixing a date, etc., had already received the blessings of the two Prime Ministers and was acceptable in principle, is correct.

4. What I am interested to know is this: Is it true that in West Pakistan Khwaja Shahabuddin issued an order that no fresh notice should be issued and that orders should be kept pending? If this is a fact, then it has some effect on us, whatever we may or may not have said. It is true that there is not much room left for issuing notices in West Pakistan.

1. Note, 11 November 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. He along with Nehru addressed the joint session of the Standing Committees of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference and the Pakistan Newspaper Editors' Conference in New Delhi on 4 and 5 May 1950.

3. The talks were held in New Delhi from 2 to 8 April 1950.

4. From 26 to 28 April 1950.

5. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 14 Part II, p. 162.

6. At a meeting held in New Delhi on 27 and 28 June 1950 between Khwaja Shahabuddin, Gopalaswami Ayyangar and Ajit Prasad Jain, an agreement was reached on settlement of moveable properties left in 1947 by Hindus in Pakistan and Muslims in India.



5. The position thus is that while all of us agreed that something should be done and accepted the principle of stopping these declarations of evacuee property in future, nothing definite was decided and it was hoped to have an overall agreement.

6. That is so, but in the circumstances, it does follow that we must take action only in rather especial and obvious cases. That has been stressed by me on several occasions. I find, however, that the practice followed by the Custodians has not varied much and highly legal arguments are advanced and considered as to whether a person should be declared an evacuee or not. Indeed I was surprised to read a very long judgment of the Custodian General recently. Personally, I entirely disagree with that judgment on the merits. Apart from the law, the intention of Government was perfectly clear and indeed because of that, Government varied the law. It must always be remembered that the evacuee property law is a very peculiar, unusual and abnormal law, which indeed is entirely outside the scope of normal legislation. Therefore, it cannot be interpreted and acted upon with the same strictness as ordinary laws are dealt with. The human aspect must always be considered, as also the obvious intention of the Government and the Legislature.

7. The fact that in our application of evacuee property laws and rules we have to be exceedingly careful in future and only take up very special cases, must be borne in mind by all Custodians. Justice has to be done and where there is the slightest doubt, it is to be interpreted in favour of the person concerned. Legal arguments should not be allowed to come in the way of broad justice.

8. If it is true that Pakistan has definitely ordered that no further notices should be issued, then this casts a special burden upon us.

9. A copy of this note might be sent to Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar.

#### 4. To C.C. Biswas<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
19 November 1950

My dear Biswas,

Thank you for your letter of the 17th November.

There is undoubtedly a problem about the Muslim newcomers to Assam. From the numbers given, it would not appear to be a very serious one. Nevertheless we should try to do something. It is not quite clear to me what we can do. The

1. J.N. Collection.



Assam Government suggested introducing the permit system. We just cannot do that, as it will be against the Indo-Pakistan Agreement and would immediately stop migrants' movements back to their homes. We can write to Pakistan again and ask them to stop this movement. But even for them, it cannot be very easy to stop it.

There has been for some time past an exodus of Muslims from India to West Pakistan *via* the Sind-Rajputana border. This has taken place without permits and in spite of our permit system. About two hundred a day have been going there. We cannot check them, unless we keep considerable forces all along the border.

I suppose you will be coming here before long to take the oath.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 5. To Liaquat Ali Khan<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
24 November 1950

My dear Nawabzada,

Thank you for your letter of the 21st November 1950.<sup>2</sup> I can well appreciate, from my own experience, how busy you must have been. The subject matter of our correspondence is of sufficient importance to justify the fullest consideration. We have indeed given a great deal of consideration to this matter and have corresponded about it for a long time now. Unfortunately all this consideration and correspondence has not, thus far, yielded any substantial result. Whether further correspondence on this subject will lead to a happier conclusion, I do not know. But I feel that I should reply to your letter fully so as to clear up any possible misunderstanding. I am taking the earliest opportunity to do so, in spite of heavy work and many preoccupations. Tomorrow morning I am leaving Delhi for two or three days.

2. Before dealing with other points, I should like to discuss the *raison d'être* of our suggestion for a no-war declaration. We thought, and subsequent

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Reviewing his correspondence with Nehru on various matters, Liaquat Ali stated that "the crux of the difficulty is the reluctance of your Government to substitute on any issue impartial arbitration for threatened and actual use of force. India has been unwilling to accept the decision of an impartial arbiter on any issue.... The solution to our problems will come...when each side accepts adjudication of all issues that are justiciable and arbitration of all other issues."

events have proved it, that any complicated declaration would lead to interminable correspondence. We were anxious for an immediate step forward even though it might only be a first step. We were convinced that this would have given Indo-Pakistan problems a new orientation. Hence we suggested the simplest possible no-war declaration. It is easy to criticise that, but can anyone doubt that such a declaration coming from our respective Governments would have made a tremendous difference in the relations between India and Pakistan and would have lightened the dark and heavy atmosphere that surrounds us?

3. We are fully aware of the obligations that our two countries, in common with many others, have accepted by becoming members of the United Nations.<sup>3</sup> But you know as well as I do that in spite of the brave and eloquent words of the Charter of the United Nations, fierce disputes and impassioned arguments are in progress at Lake Success, even as I write. Member nations look at each other with fear and suspicion and the world stands on the verge of catastrophe. It is even possible that the U.N. may change its original shape and character. All this is not the fault of the Charter but of fear which envelops the nations of the world and drives them continuously in a wrong direction. Suppose that the leaders of the Great Powers met, or otherwise agreed, to issue a simple no-war declaration, such as I have suggested to you, would not that make a startling difference? There would be a great sigh of relief from hundreds of millions of people and imminent threat of war would, for the moment at least, fade away. A chance would be given to the nations to think calmly and dispassionately of their problems and possibly find a way out. And yet that simple declaration would contain nothing new. It would only be a reiteration of a part of the Charter.

4. We have had to contend also, in India and Pakistan, with this pervasive sense of fear and apprehension and the possibility of war between our two countries. This has been created by a variety of circumstances and by the persistence of certain disputes between Pakistan and India which remain unsolved. I have drawn your attention to the type of propaganda that has been going on in Pakistan and the belligerent character of certain speeches and writings in the Pakistan press about India.<sup>4</sup> The Charter of the United Nations has not helped in stopping these speeches and writings or even in improving our relations. Nearly eight months ago, you and I met, under a happy inspiration, at a moment of deep crisis for our countries. After some discussion, we arrived at certain simple conclusions. There was nothing novel about them. But they were the result of an earnest approach by both sides, and, immediately, there was a

3. Liaquat Ali had written, "By joining the United Nations our countries have already renounced the use or threatened use of non-pacific means of every kind.... A bare announcement that we will not declare war unless attacked adds nothing to these commitments."

4. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 326-327.



remarkable change in the atmosphere of both countries. There was a cooling of tempers and understanding replaced passion and prejudice. This psychological change did not solve any problem, but it went a long way to produce conditions favourable for a solution. After eight months, I think both of us can say with confidence that we did well and the results have justified our action.

5. This encouraged me to think that another move by us, such as the one that I had suggested in the shape of a simple no-war declaration, would transform the minds of Indians and Pakistanis alike. To encumber that declaration with details of procedure and programme would be to weaken the effect, which was the main purpose of the declaration proposed by us. This does not mean, of course, that practical steps, including agreement on procedure and timing, would not be necessary for resolving specific disputes. In my previous letters to you, I have attempted to deal as fully as I could with the mode of settling individual issues outstanding between our two countries.

6. You say that the crux of the difficulty in our reaching an agreement has been our reluctance to substitute, on any issue, impartial arbitration for threatened or actual use of force. I am greatly surprised at your reference to force and must deny categorically any suggestion that, at any time, we have threatened resort to force to settle a dispute with Pakistan. Force has been used by Pakistan and by India against each other in Kashmir. I do not wish to repeat the sad story of Kashmir here. But you know well that we sent our troops to Kashmir under stress of grave emergency and when an invasion of Kashmir had already begun. I am convinced that we would have failed in our duty if we had not met this aggression and rescued Kashmir from it. After long denial that Pakistan forces had gone to Kashmir, this fact had to be admitted, and there they are still, with what justification, I have completely failed to understand. Even so, after the failure of Sir Owen Dixon's mission, I stated unequivocally that India would not attack Pakistan unless she was attacked first. I asked you to make a similar declaration on behalf of Pakistan, but to this you did not respond. I do not wish to enter into a controversy over this, but you will permit me to claim that my declaration should convince all reasonable persons of the genuineness of our pacific intentions. As regards impartial arbitration, I have never stated that we would not resort to it on any issue. But there are some issues, for example, the future of Kashmir, which cannot be settled by arbitration. If I am not mistaken, your Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Mr Gurmani<sup>5</sup> has expressed the same view publicly. In international affairs all kinds of issues arise. Some lend themselves to adjudication, some to arbitration and some to settlement only by agreement among the parties. To recognise this is not to refuse arbitration on matters which lend themselves to a settlement by this method.

5. Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani.



7. Coming to the issues mentioned specifically in your letter, I shall take up Kashmir first.<sup>6</sup> As I have said before, this matter is now before the United Nations. At no time have we resiled from any statement made or assurance given by us. The reasons for our inability to accept arbitration on certain points of dispute regarding the timing of the withdrawal of Pakistan forces, the disbandment and disarming of 'Azad Kashmir' forces, and finally the withdrawal of Indian forces from Jammu and Kashmir territory have been fully explained from time to time. Our contention has all along been that the phasing of the withdrawal of our forces must depend upon conditions that would enable us to discharge effectively our obligation to ensure the security of the State. We have certain obligations which we had solemnly undertaken. The maintenance of the security of the territory of Kashmir State is the paramount obligation of any Government which undertakes it. To fail in that duty is to betray the people of Kashmir and our own people. What forces are necessary for the purpose may be a matter for agreement by negotiation. It can hardly be a matter for arbitration.

8. In the course of the long discussions that have taken place in regard to Kashmir, we have always pointed out that it was essential for the origin of this trouble to be considered and decided upon; that unless this was done, any conclusion arrived at would lack reality. Unfortunately these discussions have concerned themselves with details and have ignored the aggression that has led to this conflict.

9. The question of canal waters has been the subject of many conferences and long correspondence. I do not wish to burden this letter with a repetition of what I have said previously on so many occasions. But I must point out that the statement in your letter that "at the time of Partition, Indian representatives joined in declaring that there was no question of varying the shares of the two new countries in our common waters required for irrigation" is not correct. When the matter came up before the Punjab Partition Committee, this was not agreed to. The correct position is set out briefly in subsequent paragraphs.<sup>7</sup> Nor, as I have repeatedly pointed out, is it correct that India has, since Partition, sought to compel acceptance of greatly increased supplies for India at the

6. Liaquat Ali wrote that "our joint undertaking to accept the decision of a fair and impartial plebiscite... has remained a hollow declaration" owing to rejection by India of all recommendations for withdrawal of her forces prior to holding of the plebiscite. He added that while Pakistan was prepared to accept an impartial arbiter to settle differences over the interpretation of the U.N. proposals, India was not. "The fact that a dispute is not justiciable is not a valid reason for refusing to accept the impartial decision of experienced and understanding statesmen."

7. The Punjab Partition Committee, contrary to the view expressed by the Committee on the Division of Physical Assets of the Punjab, declared on 28 July 1947, "In regard to canals there was a difference of opinion over fundamental issues and it was decided to refer the matter to the Central Arbitral Committee."

expense of irrigation vital to Pakistan. I am deeply distressed that the agreement reached between the two countries in May 1948, in a friendly spirit, and our honourable fulfilment of it, should be so distorted and denounced.<sup>8</sup>

10. Since we disagree even about facts, apart from interpretation, there is little use in my recapitulating at length what I have said before on the subject of this agreement. But I cannot let pass, without challenge, the charge now made that only after two and a half years, India has accepted the principle that the canal waters dispute should be "adjudicated."<sup>9</sup> As far back as May 1948, the Government of India and Pakistan agreed "to approach the problem, in a practical spirit on the basis of the East Punjab (now Punjab, India) Government diminishing its supply to the Pakistan canals, in order to enable the West Punjab (now Punjab, Pakistan) Government to tap alternative sources." In the same practical spirit, the Government of India suggested,<sup>10</sup> in August 1949, the appointment of a joint technical commission to make an investigation for this purpose. If I may say so, it is Pakistan's intransigence which has held up this essential preliminary technical investigation. Our objection to reference of this canal waters issue to the International Court of Justice has been due not to any desire to shirk settlement of differences by an impartial body but to the honest belief that a matter of this kind can best be settled by a small group of persons of the highest judicial standing, from India and Pakistan, who can appraise all the vital practical factors on the spot.

11. I do not see why you should say that, as may be expected, a tribunal of the kind that we have suggested will be deadlocked. That seems to me to be an unjustified reflection upon the impartiality of your judges and ours. In any case, we have not suggested that, if the members of this tribunal should be divided, the point or points on which there is a deadlock should be referred to another tribunal which would consist of an odd number of judges, some of whom would be nationals neither of India nor of Pakistan.<sup>11</sup> All that we have suggested is that the two Governments should agree in advance to abide by the decisions of the tribunal in all matters referred to it, and that, if unfortunately

8. Liaquat Ali charged that "India arbitrarily cut off during the critical sowing season in spring of 1948 the supplies of water of every Pakistan canal that crossed the boundary" and the flow was only partially restored after Pakistan met certain conditions exacted by India and "inimical" to Pakistan. "Even your recent assurance that Partition supplies will not again be cut off has since been qualified by conditions" unacceptable to Pakistan.

9. Liaquat Ali wrote that only after two and a half years had India accepted the principle of adjudication but, instead of accepting Pakistan's suggestion, proposed a new tribunal.

10. During the Inter-Dominion Conference held in New Delhi from 4 to 6 August 1949.

11. Liaquat Ali presumed that in the event of the proposed tribunal being deadlocked, India would suggest reference of the disputes to another tribunal consisting of judges belonging to countries other than India and Pakistan. He wrote such a counter-proposal "contains a double veto and permits of endless delay."



there is an equal division of opinion among the judges on any points, the two Governments should try to settle these points by negotiation among themselves and, failing that, resort to arbitration or adjudication by a mutually agreed special agency or an international organisation recognised by both Governments. Since our proposal provides that the agreed or majority decision of the tribunal should be accepted by both parties, our hope is that the points of difference will be so few as to make their settlement easier and more expeditious than the reference of the whole dispute to a tribunal sitting thousands of miles away.

12. You refer to a governing convention for the creation of this tribunal.<sup>12</sup> I cannot do better than quote what I have said on this subject in my letter of the 27th October:

Clearly there must be agreement between us regarding the composition of the tribunal, its terms of reference and powers. The composition has already been dealt with. As regards the tribunal's powers, I think we should lay it down that it should have final authority to deal with the matters referred to it. The judges can decide unanimously or by majority. They will have all the powers of superior courts in regard to summoning of witnesses, etc. They will settle their procedure and method of working, as such tribunals do. We must invest the tribunal with the highest authority and not make it feel that it is just a stepping stone to something else. We must agree to abide by its decision in all matters referred to it.<sup>13</sup>

Once these broad principles are accepted by you, details can be worked out by discussion between your representatives and ours. This is all that seems necessary.

13. You refer to the construction of new irrigation projects by India.<sup>14</sup> To describe as new a project like Bhakra which has been under consideration or preparation for the last thirty years<sup>15</sup> is hardly accurate. Such new proposals as we have considered since Partition are essential for the development of Punjab, India, and adjoining areas in India. As we have pointed out to your representatives

12. Liaquat Ali stated that Pakistan would study sympathetically and with an open mind the draft of a governing convention for the tribunal proposed by India and accept the proposal if it provided for a Court that would assure effective adjudication. But he still preferred reference to the International Court of Justice to a tribunal.

13. See *ante*, pp. 304-305.

14. Liaquat Ali noted that India had decided to continue the construction of new irrigation projects designed to appropriate more water at the expense of Pakistan. "Yet the right to do this is the very issue to be adjudicated."

15. In 1920, a report was prepared by the Government of India on the Bhakra-Nangal project on the Sutlej and the actual work on the Nangal dam, seven miles below Bhakra, started in 1945. Estimates for the greater part of the Bhakra project were drawn up before Partition.



repeatedly, in our view there is a sufficiency of water in the Indus Basin for all your purposes as well as ours, provided that we approach the problem in a spirit of mutual accommodation. We have persistently urged a joint enquiry to confirm this but Pakistan has avoided such an investigation. That, I venture to say, is no reason why the development of the East Punjab should be held up.

14. I did not suggest reference of the evacuee property dispute to the same tribunal as the one proposed for the canal waters issue because the problem is legal;<sup>16</sup> I did so primarily to expedite an equitable settlement with the help of an agency whose impartiality would command confidence. This dispute has formed the subject of prolonged discussions between our two Governments and we attach even greater importance to its early settlement because of the mass of human suffering involved by delay and its consequent repercussion on relations between the two countries. We both know how intense the feeling on this subject is. The value of agricultural property in certain areas would, of course, depend on irrigation facilities that might be available from existing or alternative sources, and the proposed tribunal would no doubt take this factor into consideration in suggesting how best the dispute should be adjusted between the two parties. Sale and exchange of urban evacuee property<sup>17</sup> were tried on an earlier occasion but without any substantial result for reasons which I need not go into here. After all that has happened, it would not be practicable to revert to an agreement which would leave out large areas of agricultural land affecting the majority of evacuees in each country. Frankly, I fail to see why there should be any objection to settling this matter in the manner proposed by us.

As for the release of assets of Pakistan, you are well aware that there are counter-claims.<sup>18</sup>

15. I must express my extreme regret that after all the efforts we have made and the lengthy correspondence which we have had, we should arrive at this dead end. This is our common misfortune. I hope that we may find some way out of this unhappy deadlock in the future.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

16. Liaquat Ali doubted that the problem of evacuee property involved questions of a legal nature. "To be sure the value of property in a region that requires irrigation depends upon an authoritative definition of that region's rights to a continuation of its water supplies. Apart from that the question seems to be factual and economic."

17. According to Liaquat Ali, if India accepted Pakistan's offer "that there be freedom of sale and exchange of urban evacuee property in both countries the problem will be reduced to manageable proportions."

18. Liaquat Ali had referred to the question of release of assets of Pakistan withheld by India as another dispute on which negotiations had failed.

## 6. On Correspondence with Liaquat Ali Khan<sup>1</sup>

The House will remember that I promised<sup>2</sup> to lay on the Table of the House the correspondence that had passed between me and the Prime Minister of Pakistan in regard to various matters, notably the no-war declaration. Subsequently that correspondence enlarged itself and other matters also came within its scope. I am laying on the Table, therefore, a printed pamphlet containing this correspondence.<sup>3</sup> I need not say much about it, because I am sure honourable Members would like to read it; and then, perhaps, if they wish to ask anything about it, I would be glad to enlighten them. I would add that this correspondence contains, apart from the no-war declaration, the proposals we made about the setting up of a tribunal more especially to consider two disputes, one in regard to canal waters and the other about evacuee property. Honourable Members have been asking me questions about them. This correspondence will enable them to understand what our proposals were and what the response of the Pakistan Government to these proposals has been. I regret to say that after nearly a year's correspondence, we have arrived at no solid result.

Last night I received another communication from Mr Liaquat Ali Khan<sup>4</sup> in answer to my last letter<sup>5</sup> which is published in this document. It has not been possible for me to include that in this pamphlet because it came too late. I am placing a cyclostyled copy of that also on the Table of the House. I hope that this document will be available to honourable Members in the course of the day, and each one of them can have a copy.

Naturally, there has not been time since I received Mr Liaquat Ali Khan's letter to send an answer. We shall do that as soon as possible, and a copy of that answer will also be furnished to Members.<sup>6</sup> Meanwhile I should like to make brief comments on some of the points arising out of the Pakistan Prime Minister's latest communication.

1. Statement in Parliament, 28 November 1950. *Parliamentary Debates, Official Report*, 1950, Vol. VI, Part II, cols 761-765.
2. On 15 November 1950.
3. Liaquat Ali also placed it before the Pakistan Constituent Assembly on 28 November 1950.
4. Dwelling on various issues concerning Indo-Pakistan relations in his reply of 27 November, Liaquat Ali gave his views on Nehru's proposal of a no-war declaration and complained about anti-Pakistan propaganda in the Indian press. He assured Nehru that Pakistan had no intention of attacking India and invited him to visit Karachi as "it will serve the interests of our two countries if we meet personally."
5. See the preceding item.
6. See the next item for Nehru's reply to Liaquat Ali Khan.



It is rather perhaps not very easy for honourable Members to follow the comments on a letter which they have not read. No doubt they will read it a little later. As a matter of fact, most of the points raised in Mr Liaquat Ali Khan's communication have been repeatedly discussed in the course of the correspondence. There is a great deal of repetition, naturally, in our letters to each other. Most of these points have been dealt with fully in my previous correspondence and I shall answer them fully when I send my written reply to Mr Liaquat Ali Khan. For the present, I will just make some brief comments. What I say now is not said in any spirit of controversy; the importance of good relations between India and Pakistan is too great for any of us to imperil their future by words that excite passion. At the same time, we have to make our position clear.

I may add that I had drawn Mr Liaquat Ali Khan's attention repeatedly to the kind of press propaganda as well as statements made by individuals in Pakistan which was a direct incitement to war. I pointed this out to him and said that this kind of thing naturally did not lead to good relations between the two countries. Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, in the course of his last letter, has referred to something about the Indian press. What I say is in reply to that. Mr Liaquat Ali Khan has referred to the tone of the press throughout India and particularly in West Bengal towards the Delhi Agreement. I have had occasion previously to express my regret over the attitude of certain newspapers towards the Agreement that Mr Liaquat Ali Khan and I signed last April. It is not fair, however, to accuse the entire Indian press.<sup>7</sup> On the whole, the leading newspapers of this country have dealt with the Agreement helpfully and in a spirit of responsibility, and even the tone of some that were once hostile improved considerably after a while. If now and then there has been criticism of the Pakistan Government, that has been due to many causes, not a few of which it is in the power of the Pakistan Government to remove.

As for the alleged activities of certain individuals,<sup>8</sup> they are of no consequence and one should not take serious notice of them. May I add that this has reference to instances of one or two individuals who, I believe, proclaimed some time ago that they have set up a parallel Government or some such thing. I have not been personally aware of it; but I have pointed out that the matter is of no consequence. In any case, what counts is the firm resolve of the Government of India to implement that Agreement in full.

7. Liaquat Ali wrote that while Nehru criticised the Pakistan press, he ignored "the attitude of the press throughout India and particularly in West Bengal, where, the Delhi Agreement notwithstanding, even former Ministers of your Cabinet continue to conduct, apparently without hindrance, a virulent propaganda campaign against Pakistan and against the very Pact to which you have referred."
8. Liaquat Ali stated that some elements had gone to "incredible lengths" and "set up what they publicly proclaim is the Provisional Government of East Pakistan. Mr J.P. Mitter describes himself with impunity as its President."



Then, reference has been made by Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, in his last letter, to Junagadh.<sup>9</sup> In Junagadh, it was the will of the people that prevailed, not any military effort by India. Mr Liaquat Ali Khan's reference to large-scale military movements of Indian forces towards the borders of Pakistan during the Bengal troubles<sup>10</sup> is a misunderstanding of our action. We had no desire then to attack Pakistan just as we have none to attack her now. Our measures were purely defensive and taken during a period of high tension when we should have failed in our duty if we had not taken all precautions for the security of the country.

I am glad to note that in reply to my declaration made some months ago at a press conference that India would not resort to war in Kashmir unless attacked,<sup>11</sup> Mr Liaquat Ali Khan has stated that Pakistan has no intention of attacking India. As for his other arguments regarding Kashmir,<sup>12</sup> I do not propose to answer them at length since our position has been made clear repeatedly. I would only say that while we sent our forces to Kashmir after the Government of the State had lawfully acceded to India, with the full approval of its most numerous and representative popular party, Pakistan sent its troops into what had become Indian territory, without any justification. As for the settlement of the Kashmir dispute, we have resiled from none of the assurances that we have given to the people of Jammu and Kashmir or to the United Nations.

I shall not go into the canal waters dispute here,<sup>13</sup> beyond saying that nothing that we have said is inaccurate. There is some argument about what has been said. The statement attributed by the Prime Minister of Pakistan to our representatives was made by our representatives on a sub-committee, whose report, on the subject of canal waters, was not accepted by the Punjab Partition Committee, because of the fundamental differences that existed over the question of the distribution of the waters. I may add also, as the House will remember,

9. Liaquat Ali expressed surprise at Nehru's assertion that India never resorted to force to settle disputes with Pakistan and added that the Indian military forces had "occupied Junagadh and its neighbouring states which lawfully acceded to Pakistan and form part of its territories."
10. Liaquat Ali wrote of "a large-scale movement of the Indian military forces in forward area close to the borders of Pakistan just before I came to Delhi for the conversations which resulted in the Delhi Agreement." Nehru denied on 10 March the charge by Liaquat Ali on 6 March of regular Indian troop concentration on the East Bengal border. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 14 Part I, pp. 102-103.
11. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 415-424.
12. Liaquat Ali asked whether despite India's repeatedly urging the Security Council and the UNCIP to consider the question of "what you describe as the 'origin of the trouble', have they not considered it over and over again and not accepted India's contention?" He added, "If there is any aggression in Kashmir it is by India against the people of that State who are continuously being kept under Indian heel by means of force."
13. This issue was dealt with in Nehru's letter of 11 December 1950 to Liaquat Ali Khan. See the next item.

in the early days there were numerous committees and sub-committees dealing with Partition matters. There was a Punjab Partition Committee, consisting of representatives of the two Punjabs, quite apart from the Central Partition Committee. That Punjab Partition Committee had appointed a sub-committee in the Punjab and in that sub-committee certain statements were made to which Mr Liaquat Ali Khan now draws our attention. But those statements, when they came up before the Punjab Partition Committee, were not agreed to by either party. They did not come to an agreement.

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan has said that he is convinced that a war between India and Pakistan would be an unmitigated disaster for both countries. He has given the assurance that he will continue to work for peace. I fully share this conviction and have affirmed it on many occasions. India's will to peace is certainly no less than that of Pakistan and I can, here and now, give a common assurance that we shall continue to work for peace with our neighbouring country.

The discussions between Mr Liaquat Ali Khan and me that preceded the Delhi Agreement brought out fully the value of personal contacts. I fully believe in them. Mr Liaquat Ali Khan has kindly invited me to pay another visit to Karachi as soon as my duties permit. My duty here in Parliament and other preoccupations make a visit to Karachi difficult for the next few weeks. I welcome, however, Mr Liaquat Ali Khan's invitation and shall avail myself of it as soon as circumstances permit.

## 7. To Liaquat Ali Khan<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 11, 1950

My dear Nawabzada,

Your letter of the 27th November 1950 reached me that evening at about 8 p.m. It was too late then to include it in the printed collection that I was to lay on the Table of our Parliament the following morning. But I placed a copy of it along with the printed correspondence before the House. And, as there was no time to prepare a full reply, I made a statement<sup>2</sup> in which I attempted to deal briefly with some of the points that your letter raised. For convenience of reference, I attach a copy of that statement. I am sorry for the delay in replying to your letter. I have been overwhelmed with work during these days and, as

1. J.N. Collection.

2. See the preceding item.



you are well aware, the international situation has become progressively more critical.

2. We have gone over the ground covered by your last letter so often that I find it difficult to say anything very new. I can only express my regret, once more, that, after all these months of argument, I have been unable to persuade you to accept the value of a simple no-war declaration.<sup>3</sup> I am as convinced as ever that such a declaration would go a long way to clear the atmosphere for a friendly discussion of all the issues that are now outstanding between our two countries. In view of the dark clouds of war that are spreading all over the world, such a declaration by India and Pakistan would have peculiar value. However, even though we have not been able to agree on such a declaration, I welcome your assurance that Pakistan has no intention of attacking India, and your statement that Pakistan wants a peaceful settlement of the Kashmir question. As I stated before Parliament on the 28th November, India is pledged to peace and I gave a solemn assurance that we shall continue to work for peace with our neighbour country. There, I think, we must leave the matter for the present.

3. Press Propaganda: Although we have discussed these matters repeatedly, I feel that I should deal in this letter with certain observations that you have made. I shall take up first your reference to what you call the virulent propaganda against Pakistan in the Indian press. I must point out that the leading newspapers of this country have dealt with the Delhi Agreement helpfully and with a sense of responsibility.<sup>4</sup> I am also satisfied that the tone of the Calcutta newspapers has improved considerably in recent months. Leading newspapers in Pakistan, however, stand out in sharp contrast and anti-Indian propaganda of an extreme type continues from day to day. This applies more especially to the *Dawn* of Karachi. In its leading articles and its news columns, there is unjust and unbridled criticism of India. Fictitious reports appear of economic and political conditions in India.<sup>5</sup> All kinds of base motives are imputed to us; the latest example of

3. Liaquat Ali wrote that a mere declaration as suggested by Nehru "would not make the least difference." He thought that the Delhi Pact had been successful because "it was not a mere declaration of good intentions. It devised ways and means of giving form and shape to those intentions and set up an elaborate administrative machinery to implement them." He repeated his suggestion of "devising a concrete procedure to solve some pending and all future disputes between India and Pakistan."
4. *The Statesman*, in its editorial on 9 April 1950, termed the Agreement as "little short of miraculous." *The Times of India* stated on 11 April that "it is an act of faith, hope and charity....One senses a change in Pakistan's approach." *The Hindu* wrote on 11 April, "The Agreement is a brief document but it goes to the heart of the matter."
5. In an editorial on the food situation in India, *Dawn* commented on 20 November 1950, "It is to the diversion of the country's resources to non-productive purposes and to vindictive policies against their most important neighbour that they owe most of their miseries."



this is the gross perversion of our relations with Nepal.<sup>6</sup> It gives me no pleasure to say all this; I sincerely wish that things were otherwise. But for a fair appraisal, I think that we should try to see both sides of the picture.

4. Provisional Government of East Bengal: I have enquired into your allegation about the so-called provisional government of East Bengal.<sup>7</sup> I did not know anything about it. I am told that in April last there was an announcement on the air from a secret source, by somebody calling himself "the Voice of East Bengal", of the formation of a "Provisional Government of East Bengal" with J.P. Mitter as its "Head". Attempts were made immediately by the police and others to locate this illegal transmitter, but without success. Since then there has been no announcement of this kind, nor have any activities of the "Provisional Government" come to our notice. You will no doubt remember that, during the communal tension in February, March and April, irresponsible statements were made in the two Bengals. I am told, for example, that immediately preceding the disturbances in Dacca last February, there was a broadcast from the Dacca Radio, after the 9 o'clock news one night, calling for vengeance on non-Muslims. I am sure you will agree that stray incidents of this kind are best ignored. In any case, I can assure you that I will not tolerate any illegal activities on Indian soil directed against the integrity and security of Pakistan. The large-scale movement of the military forces of India last February that you have mentioned was, as I stated in Parliament, a purely precautionary defensive measure, taken in a period of high tension.

5. Kashmir: As for Kashmir, you have repeated what has been said before on behalf of Pakistan, and no purpose will be served by my repeating what I have said so often on behalf of India. I would only point out that we are, and always have been, prepared to agree to any reasonable arrangements that would combine effective protection of the security of the State with complete freedom to the people of Jammu and Kashmir to decide their own future.

6. Canal Waters: In your letter dated the 21st November 1950 you had said that "at the time of Partition, the Indian representatives joined in *declaring*<sup>8</sup> that there was no question of varying the shares of *the two new countries* in our *Common Waters required for irrigation*." I characterised this statement as not correct in my letter to you dated the 24th November 1950<sup>9</sup> and I maintain that I was correct in so characterising it. You based your original statement apparently on the Report of the Reconstituted Committee B appointed by the Punjab Partition Committee on the Division of Physical Assets of the Punjab.

6. *Dawn* wrote on 10 November 1950, "Bharat appears to have lost one more foothold in the Himalayas, and it has turned at full blast its battery of propaganda against the present regime in Nepal."

7. See *ante*, p. 318, footnote 8.

8. Emphasis in the original.

9. See *ante*, pp. 310-316.

In your present letter you have put within inverted commas certain words taken from this report which are by no means the same as what you had said in your previous letter. The actual words used in that Report are: "The Committee is agreed that there is no question of varying the *authorised shares of water to which the two zones and the various canals are entitled.*" It is only fair to point out that your original statement lacked accuracy. I note also that you have not referred to my further statement that, when this Committee's report came up before the main Punjab Partition Committee, it was not agreed to. On the contrary, the Punjab Partition Committee concluded that "in regard to canals there was a difference of opinion over fundamental issues and it was decided to refer the matter to the Central Arbitral Committee after both sides had prepared their cases."

7. Your further assertion that, since Partition, India has sought to compel acceptance of greatly increased supplies for herself at the expense of irrigation vital to Pakistan is absolutely without justification. India only proposes to utilise the waters to which she is entitled, but, before doing so, she has generously agreed not to prejudice any existing irrigation in Pakistan with such waters until Pakistan has had reasonable time to tap alternative sources which are so abundantly available in her own limits. This was fully realised by the representatives of Pakistan when they put their signatures to the Agreement of 4th May 1948. It is, I confess, a matter of amazement to me that you should still seek to maintain that that Agreement was made under compulsion.<sup>10</sup>

8. Pakistan's intransigence as regards the technical examination agreed to between the two countries hardly requires proof. Engineers of the two countries have no doubt met more than once, but if, in spite of these meetings and the mass of factual data available, no progress has been made in the settlement of the dispute, it can only be attributed to the refusal of the representatives of the Pakistan Government to permit the two sets of engineers to get on with the technical examination of the problem. It is incorrect to say that the works, which in India are now in progress, "would inevitably devastate some of the richest areas in Pakistan." It is our firm conviction that, if only the technical examination is allowed to be made in a spirit of mutual understanding and accommodation, not only the richest areas in Pakistan but all other legitimately irrigable areas will get the supply of water they reasonably need. I have no doubt that, if the tribunal which I have suggested is established and is assisted by the results of such a technical examination, it would not be difficult for it to find an equitable solution of the problem.

9. Evacuee Property: I can only regret that you should still think that the tribunal we have suggested would not serve any useful purpose. I am also disappointed at your refusal to discuss the evacuee property dispute pending a

10. Liaquat Ali wrote, "As for the Agreement of May 1948, all that I maintain is that it was made under compulsion."



settlement in the canal waters dispute, except on the basis suggested by you, namely, that there should be freedom of sale and exchange of urban property. In my previous letter I have explained why we feel that this method of approach to the evacuee property problem would not lead to a satisfactory solution. I need not repeat what I have said previously.

10. Pakistan Assets: I think you do me less than justice in saying that I have summarily dismissed the question of release of Pakistan assets. In my very first letter dated 18th January 1950<sup>11</sup> (paras 7 to 10), I had referred in detail to the nature of the disagreement which had arisen between the two Governments on this issue and also drawn your attention to the large financial claims by Government of India which have been outstanding for a long time. By way of illustration of these claims I may mention the sums due to us on account of the military stores transferred to Pakistan, the payment of sums realised by the sale of surplus stores, and the share of expenditure incurred by India on the Joint Defence Council. It would not be correct to say that the question of release of Pakistan assets is a matter on which negotiations between the two Governments have failed. In fact there have already been informal discussions and correspondence with the Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan and with your Finance Ministry and some progress has been made in clarifying the issues. You are aware that this question along with certain other financial issues in dispute has been placed by your Government on the agenda of the Inter-Dominion Conference at the Secretariat level. On our side too, we have proposed a number of financial issues for discussion at this Conference. I am sure you will agree that it is desirable to treat all these outstanding issues together rather than deal with them piecemeal. This Conference, which was to be held on the 4th September, has had to be postponed to suit the mutual convenience of the two Governments. I understand that it is going to be held on the 18th of this month.

11. In conclusion, I should like to thank you for your invitation to me to visit Karachi. I attach value to periodical meetings between us as they can help us more than anything to understand our respective points of view, to pave the way to a settlement of outstanding issues and, generally, to promote good relations between our two countries. This month our Parliament will go on until the 21st December at least and the session may be prolonged. On the 25th I expect the Australian Prime Minister here for a couple of days. As he goes from here to Karachi, his visit will doubtless keep you busy till the end of the year. Soon after that both of us have to go to London.<sup>12</sup> It looks, therefore, as if my visit to Karachi will have to wait until after our return from the U.K.

12. As our previous correspondence has already been placed before Parliament here and your Constituent Assembly, I think that the present letter

11. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 14 Part I, pp. 31-34.

12. To attend the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in January 1951.



should also be placed before our Parliament. Indeed I gave an assurance to this effect to Members of the House. I therefore propose to place a copy of this letter on the table of the House on the 15th December. If you like, you can publish it on the same day.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 8. To B. Mookerjee<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 22, 1950

Dear Shri Mookerjee,<sup>2</sup>

I have seen your letter dated December 18th addressed to Dutt.<sup>3</sup> The information you give in this letter from personal enquiry has rather shocked me. To some extent, in the existing state of affairs in East Bengal, one can expect mischief as well as a lack of proper administration. Unfortunately all this is governed a great deal by Indo-Pakistan relations generally and by the peculiarly backward condition of East Bengal. Nevertheless what you have written goes much further. I hope you have drawn the attention of our Minister, Shri C.C. Biswas, to this. Only authentic cases should be sent. I am asking Dutt to communicate with the Pakistan Government.

I am sorry I have not written to you since you took charge. As you know, I have been frightfully busy. You must know, however, from various statements that I have made in Parliament and elsewhere what our general policy is. That general policy is to try to better conditions between India and Pakistan in every way, though not giving in on any important or vital matter. That is not only the right course to adopt but is the only way to serve the minorities. The world is in a bad way and every problem gets mixed up with other problems. It is something to hold on and prevent a worsening of the situation. As a matter of fact, the very large-scale return of Hindu migrants, more especially from West Bengal to East Bengal, has been a heartening feature. But Sylhet appears to be particularly bad.

With all good wishes to you,

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Baidyanath Mookerjee, Member, Sylhet Municipal Board, 1937; Member, Assam Legislative Assembly, 1937-1947; Minister, Assam Government, 1946-47 and 1952-56; India's Deputy High Commissioner, Dhaka, 1950-51.
3. Subimal Dutt, at this time Additional Secretary, M.E.A.

## 9. To Lord Fraser of North Cape<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 18, 1951

My dear Lord Fraser,<sup>2</sup>

...I appreciate very greatly your kindly thought in writing to me. I can assure you that nothing could please me more than to put an end to all the differences between India and Pakistan. In saying so, I speak for my colleagues here also. We have made repeated attempts, but they have not succeeded. As a matter of fact, a conference is being held tomorrow,<sup>3</sup> at our instance, in Karachi to consider a very major issue between us, that of trade relations. We are going all out to settle them.

I agree that it serves little purpose to argue indefinitely about rights and wrongs. If a gesture could yield results, that gesture would not be lacking. But we have to deal with masses of human beings and intricate problems with far-reaching implications. There is always the danger of the gesture leading to greater complications. One tries to avoid that grave risk. Anyhow, you can rest assured that we shall do our utmost.

It was a pleasure to meet you in London.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.
2. (1888–1981); C-in-C, British Pacific Fleet, 1945–46; First Sea Lord, 1948–51.
3. The Indo-Pakistan Conference from 19 to 25 February 1951 in Karachi led to an agreement restoring trade relations between the two countries.

## 10. Recovery of Abducted Women<sup>1</sup>

Miss Mridula Sarabhai<sup>2</sup> came to see me the other day and spoke to me about the recovery of abducted women in the Bengals. According to her in spite of Inter-Dominion Agreement there was no progress made, and no one takes the initiative. Some girls have been recovered from East Bengal, but in the absence

1. Note to S. Dutt. 25 February 1951. J.N. Collection.
2. (1911–1974); a prominent social worker; visited Calcutta and Dhaka several times in 1950–51 in connection with recovery of abducted women.



of any law giving authority to do so, there is always a possibility of some writ of *habeas corpus* being issued.

It is clear that in East Bengal there were considerable number of abductions, though even there the number was far smaller than in West Pakistan or East Punjab, etc. In West Bengal, there were, if any, very few cases. I think the report of the Enquiry Committee mentions four cases which were referred to them and one of them was found to be true. Nevertheless, the East Bengal Government have stated that a number of girls were abducted in West Bengal and have sent lists of such persons. West Bengal have sent their list to East Bengal. Very probably both these lists contained names which are either spurious or which referred to persons not abducted.<sup>3</sup> Anyhow, the obvious course seems to be that these lists should be examined at official level and some clarification obtained. It is no good merely denying it from a distance.

While the real problem of abduction is in East Bengal, if we seek to do anything there, we have to do something in West Bengal as a set-off. Otherwise, the East Bengal Government is reluctant to take any steps.

Then there is the question of legal powers and a date being fixed for the abduction period as in West Pakistan, etc.

There is also the question of suitable homes for the girls recovered. Possibly some existing institutions might be utilised for the purpose. At present there are no proper reception arrangements.

Apart from the question of recovery of abducted women there is a further question of the care of unattached women and children on both sides.

I should like to know what exactly is being done and who is responsible both in Bengal and here. Is Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar interesting himself in this, and in Bengal does our Minister of State, Biswas, deal with it or the West Bengal Government? Apparently, the West Bengal Government are not particularly interested.

3. In a note prepared by the Ministry of External Affairs and circulated on 4 August 1950 among Members of Parliament, 80 women were reported by the East Bengal Search Service Bureau to have been either abducted or missing while Nehru mentioned in Parliament on 20 November 1950 that 190 abductions were reported to the East Bengal Bureau by their counterparts in West Bengal.



## 11. Anjuman Pashtoon<sup>1</sup>

I was told today that the Deputy High Commissioner of Pakistan<sup>2</sup> in Bombay is encouraging some Pathans in Bombay and Ahmedabad to form an organisation called the Anjuman Pashtoon. This consists of old reactionary people like Khan Bahadurs, etc. Because of their old contacts with the police, they can function easily even now.

This organisation has been formed as a counterblast to the Pakhtoon Jirga which functions in Delhi and elsewhere and which represents the old Khudai Khidmatgars or the Red Shirt element of the Frontier which has lately taken up the cause of the tribal areas and Afghanistan.

I was told that this Pakistani Anjuman Pashtoon recently killed a person named Bughdad Khan<sup>3</sup> in Ahmedabad and nothing happened. The police reported that the man had committed suicide which, I am told, is incorrect.

I think you might write to the Bombay Government about this Anjuman Pashtoon and warn them about it. They might watch its activities. Also tell them about this alleged murder of Bughdad Khan in Ahmedabad by other Pathans.

Evidently there are two groups of Pathans in India, one, and the larger one, in favour of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, and the other, rather Pakistani in outlook. Probably little attempt is made to distinguish the two and they are all lumped together. I think this attempt to distinguish should be made. You might inform the Home Ministry about this also.

1. Note to S. Dutt, 28 February 1951. File No. 2/6/51-Poll., M.H.A.

2. The reference is to the Pakistan Permit Officer; there was no Deputy High Commissioner for Pakistan in Bombay.

3. The cause of the death of a watchman whose decomposed body was found in a well could not be ascertained.







## 1. Cable to K.M. Panikkar<sup>1</sup>

Reference my telegram Primin 22327 dated 25th October.<sup>2</sup> This morning's papers report an official handout in Peking ordering units of the Chinese Army to advance into Tibet.<sup>3</sup> We have received no information from you about this. We deeply deplore this development both from the point of view of continuance of friendly relations between India and China and because this will help the drift to world war. We tried our utmost to develop these friendly relations and to work for peace. It is matter of great regret to us that Chinese Government have suddenly taken this action, which appears to us to be contrary to assurances of peaceful settlement given to us and on eve of departure of Tibetan Mission for Peking. We are protesting formally against this action to Chinese Ambassador here. Please communicate following to China's Foreign Minister.<sup>4</sup>

1. New Delhi, 26 October 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, p. 444.
3. The hand-out of 25 October stated that the advance of the Army into Tibet had been ordered to free Tibetans "from the imperialist oppression and consolidate the national defences of the western border of China."
4. See the next item.

## 2. Message to Chou En-lai<sup>1</sup>

We have seen with great regret report in newspapers of official statement made in Peking to the effect that "People's Army units have been ordered to advance into Tibet." We have received no intimation of this from your Ambassador here or from our Ambassador in Peking. We have been repeatedly assured of the desire of the Chinese Government to settle the Tibetan problem by peaceful means and negotiations. In an interview which India's Ambassador had recently with the Vice Foreign Minister, the latter, while reiterating the resolve of the Chinese Government to "liberate" Tibet, had expressed a continued desire to do so by peaceful means.<sup>2</sup> We informed the Chinese Government through our Ambassador of the decision of the Tibetan Delegation to proceed

1. New Delhi, 26 October 1950. J.N. Collection. This message was conveyed to Chou En-lai on 28 October 1950 on behalf of the Government of India.
2. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 437-438.



to them clearly and unequivocally. This has evidently not been done. We have not even had any information from you regarding the Chinese Government's directive to the "Liberation Army" to advance into Tibet. A full copy of this order was transmitted to us by the U.K. High Commissioner; and it was embarrassing for us not to have received intimation from our own Ambassador regarding such serious developments.<sup>3</sup> The Chinese Government's action has jeopardised our interests in Tibet and our commitments to Tibet; and our persistent efforts to secure the recognition of China in the interests of world peace have suffered a serious setback. Whether or not any representations from us would have deterred the Chinese Government from their course it was certainly necessary that our own attitude should have been explained to them with force and clarity.

3. On 27 October, Panikkar telegraphed that the semi-official release issued on the 25th afternoon contained merely the news of the official orders to the army to advance into Tibet first heard over All India Radio on the 25th morning. "By some error text of orders was published earlier in London and Delhi than in Peking."

#### 4. Tibet and Chinese Fears<sup>1</sup>

Question: What is the significance of the resolution passed by the National Conference to hold elections for a constituent assembly?

Jawaharlal Nehru: The Kashmir Government have always intended to create an elected constituent assembly. Before the outbreak of fighting in Kashmir, Shaikh Abdullah and the National Conference had envisaged that such an assembly would decide, among other questions, Kashmir's Constitution and political future, what the real attitude of people was on the issue of accession to India. This project was of necessity abandoned during the confusion accompanying the fighting. But now it is rational for the people of Kashmir to want to restore some normality in their State to enable them to get on with rebuilding a stable State. The failure of the United Nations so far to hold out any prospect of solution to the Kashmir dispute has only increased their sense of impatience.

From what I have seen of the National Conference resolution to hold constituent assembly elections, I don't think that it conflicts with the United

1. Interview with Reuter's diplomatic correspondent, Srinagar, 29 October 1950. From the *National Herald*, 31 October 1950.



Nations efforts to settle the dispute; on the contrary, anything which increases internal stability and confidence in Kashmir should help towards peaceful settlement.

Q: Do you think the elections envisaged in the resolution will be valid for the whole of Jammu and Kashmir State?

JN: In practice the proposed elections will only be possible in those parts of Kashmir which are under the administration of Shaikh Abdullah's Government. As that Government is a legal and continuing Government of the entire State, it is understandable that the resolution should treat elections as valid for the whole of Jammu and Kashmir State.

Q: What do you think are the Chinese Government's intentions as regards Tibet?

JN: It still is not clear what the Chinese Government's real intentions are. There are certain disputed areas in eastern Tibet where China had been given the right to station garrisons under the terms of former agreements. The apprehension in Peking that the United States is bent on destruction of the new regime in China is rightly or wrongly very real. This fear, based on continued American support to Chiang Kai-shek, was aggravated by General MacArthur's Formosa statement and became acute when the United Nations forces under his command crossed the 38th parallel.

I think that this fear is unjustified. The fact that Peking has not moved into North Korea does not mean that China's fears that the fighting in Korea is in danger of spreading to wider areas have disappeared.

The current Chinese policy can perhaps partly be attributed to the fact that, although Peking's policy may not be dictated by Moscow, much of the information upon which this policy is based came through Soviet sources. For example, Moscow has repeatedly said that Anglo-American "intrigues" in Tibet aimed at bringing that country into an anti-communist bloc or sphere of influence.

However unfounded these accusations may be, I wonder whether they may not have influenced the Chinese decision to move into Tibet.

Q: Are the Indian Government, through their Ambassador in Peking and through the Chinese Ambassador in Delhi, attempting to allay the Chinese fears of which you have spoken?

JN: Yes, we have tried to do so, but I don't know with what success.

Q: How do you view the Chinese action in Tibet?

JN: I greatly regret the action that the Chinese Government have taken in Tibet. News from inside Tibet is still very uncertain owing to great distances and lack of communications. The local administration in the vast country is largely autonomous for purely geographical reasons. Lhasa is situated far to the east of Tibet, and I doubt whether, even if China occupies the Tibetan capital, this will necessarily profoundly affect the situation in the western areas of the country.

Q: Do you think that events in Tibet will have repercussions in Ladakh?

JN: On the basis of the present information available, I don't think that events in Tibet will have immediate repercussions in Ladakh.

## 5. Tibetans Free to Appeal to the United Nations<sup>1</sup>

I have received a "suggestion" from Tibetan sources that Tibet would like to appeal to the United Nations against the Chinese Army's invasion. I have replied that India does not feel free to sponsor such a resolution in the United Nations, but Tibet is free to appeal directly, if it so chooses, through Secretary-General Lie.<sup>2</sup>

India has neither the resources nor the inclination to send armed assistance to Tibet. About 150 years ago an Indian army had invaded and subdued part of Tibet—considered then and ever since as a remarkable military feat in that unfriendly terrain. But the end result was that in the following winter the Indian army froze to death.

We feel India has been ill-repaid for her diplomatic friendliness toward Peking. We have set forth our dissatisfaction and resentment in two notes of protest to the Chinese Government.<sup>3</sup> The second of these notes was dispatched

1. Interview to I.F. Stone of United Press, New Delhi, 1 November 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. In a signed communication to the U.N. from Lhasa on 7 November, the members of the Tibetan Cabinet and National Assembly of Tibet strongly protested against the Chinese invasion and repudiated the Chinese claim of suzerainty over Tibet.
3. For the first note, see *ante*, pp. 331-332.



yesterday,<sup>4</sup> in which India refused to accept the validity of Peking's explanation of resort to armed invasion to enforce its suzerainty over Tibet. The texts of the diplomatic exchange between Peking and Delhi will be released on Friday.

India does not dispute China's suzerainty over Tibet and so far as India is concerned all rights formerly vested in Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist Government passed to Peking at the time of India's recognition of the communist regime. But India feels that Tibet's autonomy is as valid as China's pre-eminent domain in Tibet. Sending an army is a poor way to maintain autonomy and come to a settlement.

What was disturbing more than anything else was that Peking promised to negotiate differences with Tibet peaceably, yet started its army marching after the Tibetan Delegation had announced that it was going to Peking. Peking's statement of two days ago that it is still willing to negotiate a peaceable settlement when the Tibetans arrive at the Chinese capital is also hardly assuring. For how can there be peaceable talks at Peking, while an army advances along the rocky trails of the Tibetan Delegates' homeland?

What India will do if Tibet complains directly to the United Nations may depend upon whether future incidents force a re-examination of our China policy.

4. This note sent in response to the note of the Government of China of 30 October repudiated China's allegations that India's representation to her about Tibet was affected by foreign influences hostile to China and the Tibetan Delegation's departure to Peking was also delayed by outside instigations. It was pointed out that the suggestion of the Government of India that the Chinese suzerainty over Tibet and Tibetan autonomy should be reconciled by peaceful negotiations was not prompted by any desire to interfere or to gain any advantage. The note also said that in view of military operations undertaken by China in Tibet the Government of India could not advise the Tibetan Delegation to proceed to Peking unless the Chinese Government ordered its troops to halt their advance in Tibet.

## 6. To C. Rajagopalachari<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

November 1, 1950

My dear Rajaji,

Thank you for your note<sup>2</sup> of today.

I have been going through our own telegrams and other papers and examining with K.P.S. Menon<sup>3</sup> some of those papers in regard to Tibet. Legally our

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Not available.

3. He was the Foreign Secretary at this time.



position seems to be a weak one in regard to Tibet. Morally I find it difficult to say that the Chinese Government has deliberately deceived us at any stage. We may have deceived ourselves, and they may have done wrong in the action they took, as I think they did.

For the last year they have been talking about "liberating" Tibet as a part of the Chinese fatherland. From the 15th of July of this year there has been a great deal of talk on this, and even some Chinese troops' movements were reported to us on the Tibetan border of China. Early in August the Chinese Government issued a text of a proclamation<sup>4</sup> by the Head of their Southern Command, who was "assigned to liberate Tibet." This proclamation stated that the People's Liberation Army will soon march towards Tibet, etc. We sent a telegram<sup>5</sup> to our Ambassador asking him to point out that any such move will be most unfortunate and that this should be settled by peaceful means. In this way telegrams have been exchanged repeatedly. At no stage did the Chinese Government say to us that they would not take any military steps. They did say that they were always prepared for peaceful negotiations and that they had waited for a long time, but the Tibetan Delegation did not come. According to them, the Tibetan Delegation could not come because of imperialist manoeuvres. However that may be, the point is that there was no assurance given to us which can be said to have been broken except that they said repeatedly that they were always prepared for peaceful negotiations. When we informed them that the Tibetan Delegation was actually going to start, Chinese troops' movement had already taken place some days before.

I think that the Chinese Government have taken a very wrong step, but I do not see how they can be accused of deception. They have been perfectly clear from the beginning.

We have to remember also that the Chinese Government and people are living in constant fear of attack by the U.S.A. That fear may not be justified but it is not wholly groundless. Prominent men in the U.S. have repeatedly stated that this attack should be made. General MacArthur's views about this are well-known and he is in command in the Far East. The Korean war brought war very near to China. The crossing of the 38th parallel made them feel that that was the last step before they themselves might be attacked. There have been, it is stated, ten bombing incidents in Manchurian territory by U.S. bombers. If we can put ourselves in China and see Chiang Kai-shek with a powerful army sitting nearby to attack China, supported by the U.S., and war coming ever nearer and their own territories being bombed, then we can perhaps appreciate the temper and apprehension of the Chinese Government and people.

4. A statement to this effect by General Liu Po-chen, Chairman of the South West China Military Affairs Commission and commander of the Communist Second Field Army, was quoted by the New China News Agency on 5 August 1950.
5. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 430-431.

Of course, all this does not justify military operations against Tibet, but it does explain many things. Tibet for many years has been under British influence and the British Agent there was violently anti-Chinese. He tried his best to incite Tibetans against China. Previous Chinese Governments have protested against this, and indeed I have myself been told by their representatives. Tibet was thus looked upon as a place which was under British influence. That influence is now gone, but only six months ago the same British Agent<sup>6</sup> was there representing us.

I am writing this to you just to point out certain considerations which have to be borne in mind to understand why the Chinese Government may have developed a state of mind bordering on fear of what is going to happen, and fear leads to wrong action. I am quite sure that the Chinese Government did not intend to deceive us or to insult us deliberately.

I thought you might like to see some of these papers and so I am asking K.P.S. Menon to visit you and show them to you.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

6. Hugh Edward Richardson (b. 1905); joined I.C.S., British Trade Agent, Gyantse, and Officer-in-Charge, British Mission, Lhasa, 1936-40 and 1946-47; Indian Trade Agent, Gyantse, and Officer-in-Charge, Indian Mission, Lhasa, 1947-50.

## 7. To C. Rajagopalachari<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
November 1, 1950

My dear Rajaji,

I have received your third note<sup>2</sup> about China. You will forgive me for thinking that this would not be appropriate and this would not add either to the strength or dignity of our note, apart from the fact that the note has gone and we cannot easily make large additions to it. We are trying to make some minor verbal corrections if they reach in time. Those corrections can even be made after the note is handed. But a major paragraph cannot be added later.

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

2. Not available.



I feel that our deleting "large-scale", as suggested by you, weakens the argument. But, in view of your wishes, we are using the word "such" military operations.<sup>3</sup>

I feel there is some danger of our going too far in our condemnation of China and making it inevitable that a break should take place. As it is, rather fantastic and, I think, highly objectionable suggestions have been made by the U.S. We may be driven step by step to a decision from which we cannot withdraw and which compels us, in the wider world context, to take up an attitude which, thus far, we have consistently refused to do.

I am calling a meeting of the Cabinet tomorrow at 11 in the morning. I think we should inform it of these developments. After that we can publish this correspondence in the morning papers of the 3rd November....

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

3. The Indian note handed to the Chinese authorities on 1 November 1950 stated that in view of repeated assurances by the Government of China of their aim of a peaceful settlement in Tibet "the surprise of the Government of India was all the greater when they learnt that military operations had been undertaken by the Chinese Government against a peaceful people". There was "no justification whatever for such military operations" against the Tibetans, when there had been no allegation of provocation or resort to non-peaceful methods on their part.

## 8. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram 395 dated October 30th. Chinese military operations against Tibet have undoubtedly affected our friendly relations with China. We hope to publish correspondence with China on November 3rd morning. Last night we sent a further communication to Chinese Government.

But these developments do not affect our general policy or even our policy regarding admission of new China in United Nations. Naturally we shall have to consider every step carefully and in context of existing conditions.

1. New Delhi, 1 November 1950. J.N. Collection.



## 9. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

We understand that Tibetan Government have forwarded appeal to United Nations through their representative in Kalimpong. Copy has been sent to us. Please keep us informed of what action Secretary-General intends to take in regard to it. Meanwhile, our general instructions sent to you previously stand. We cannot sponsor appeal. Our attitude is that Tibetan problem should have been settled by peaceful negotiations and not by force. Further instructions will be sent to you on receipt of information as to developments at Lake Success.

1. New Delhi, 11 November 1950. J.N. Collection.

## 10. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram 6604.<sup>2</sup> We understand that Tibetan Government's appeal has been forwarded to U.N. by their representative at present in Kalimpong. We informed B.N. Rau sometime back that in case such appeal came we could not sponsor it but we would generally support it on grounds that the Tibetan problem should have been settled by peaceful means and not by force.

We have no information about Chinese forces moving towards Burma.<sup>3</sup>

1. New Delhi, 11 November 1950. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Krishna Menon telegraphed that the evening papers of 10 November in London had stated that the Tibetan Government had sent an appeal to the U.N. "for intervention and help" and that India would be one of the countries sponsoring it.
3. Krishna Menon stated that, according to the newspaper report, Chinese forces were moving south from Chamdo and "heading for Burma instead of eastwards towards Lhasa."

## 11. To B.C. Roy<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

November 15, 1950

My dear Bidhan,

Thank you for your letter of the 14th November.<sup>2</sup> The report in the *Hindusthan Standard* is rather exaggerated and dramatised. The story of the secret map has no significance. These maps have been in use in China continuously for the last fifty years. We know them quite well. Every Government in China has used them.

But the fact remains that the approach of a Great Power like China to our frontier makes a great difference and we have to make our arrangements accordingly. We have in fact been considering this matter carefully with our Defence people.

The main frontier is the Assam frontier. The Darjeeling bit is also important. In Assam, those tribal areas are directly under External Affairs, who function through the Governor. The Governor has, at his disposal, the Assam Rifles. We should be examining all these matters fully soon. We can hardly take the whole of Assam under the Centre.

Yours,  
Jawahar

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Not available.

## 12. To B.C. Roy<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

November 16, 1950

My dear Bidhan,

Thank you for your letter<sup>2</sup> of the 14th November, sending me a copy of your intelligence report about the Tibet border. As I have already written to you, we are giving full consideration to this matter. Your report will be considered in that connection.

It is, of course, necessary that we should keep a close watch on our border and ensure it against any possible incident that might happen. There appears to

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Not available.

me, however, a tendency among our officers to get greatly excited and take an alarmist view of all kinds of dangers, some real, others imaginary.

Yours,  
Jawahar

### 13. Policy regarding China and Tibet<sup>1</sup>

The Chinese Government having replied to our last note,<sup>2</sup> we have to consider what further steps we should take in this matter. There is no immediate hurry about sending a reply to the Chinese Government. But we have to send immediate instructions to Shri B.N. Rau as to what he should do in the event of Tibet's appeal being brought up before the Security Council or the General Assembly.

2. The content of the Chinese reply is much the same as their previous notes, but there does appear to be a toning down and an attempt at some kind of a friendly approach.

3. It is interesting to note that they have not referred specifically to our mission at Lhasa or to our trade agents or military escort at Yangtse, etc. We had mentioned these especially in our last note.<sup>3</sup> There is an indirect reference, however, in China's note. At the end, this note says that "as long as our two sides adhere strictly to the principle of mutual respect for territory, sovereignty, equality and mutual benefit, we are convinced that the friendship between China and India should be developed in a normal way, and that problems relating to Sino-Indian diplomatic, commercial and cultural relations with respect to Tibet may be solved properly and to our mutual benefit through normal diplomatic channels." This clearly refers to our trade agents and others in Tibet. We had expected a demand from them for the withdrawal of these agents, etc. The fact that they have not done so has some significance.

4. Stress is laid in China's note on Chinese sovereignty over Tibet, which, we are reminded, we have acknowledged, on Tibet being an integral part of China's territory and therefore a domestic problem. It is however again repeated

1. Note, 18 November 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. In response to the note of the Government of India of 1 November, the Chinese Government sent a reply on 16 November.

3. The Government of India in their note of 1 November stated that the Agent of the Government of India in Lhasa, the Indian trade agencies at Gyantse and Yatung, the post and telegraph officers at the trade route upto Gyantse and the military escort there should continue.



that outside influences have been at play obstructing China's mission in Tibet.<sup>4</sup> In fact, it is stated that liberation of Changtu proves that foreign forces and influences were inciting Tibetan troops to resist. It is again repeated that no foreign intervention will be permitted and that the Chinese Army will proceed.

5. All this is much the same as has been said before, but it is said in a somewhat different way and there are repeated references in the note to China desiring the friendship of India.

6. It is true that in one of our messages to the Chinese Government we used "sovereignty" of China in relation to Tibet. In our last message we used the word, "suzerainty". After receipt of China's last note, we have pointed out to our Ambassador that "suzerainty" was the right word and that "sovereignty" had been used by error.<sup>5</sup>

7. It is easy to draft a reply to the Chinese note, pressing our viewpoint and countering some of the arguments raised in the Chinese note. But, before we do so, we should be clear in our own mind as to what we are aiming at, not only in the immediate future but from a long-term view. It is important that we keep both these viewpoints before us. In all probability China, that is, present-day China, is going to be our close neighbour for a long time to come. We are going to have a tremendously long common frontier. It is unlikely, and it would be unwise to expect that the present Chinese Government will collapse, giving place to another. Therefore, it is important to pursue a policy which will be in keeping with this long-term view.

8. I think it may be taken for granted that China will take possession, in a political sense at least, of the whole of Tibet. There is no likelihood whatever of Tibet being able to resist this or stop it. It is equally unlikely that any foreign Power can prevent it. We cannot do so. If so, what can we do to help in the maintenance of Tibetan autonomy and at the same time avoiding continuous tension and apprehension on our frontiers.

9. The Chinese note has repeated that they wish the Tibetan people to have, what they call, "regional autonomy and religious freedom". This autonomy can obviously not be anything like the autonomy, verging on independence, which Tibet has enjoyed during the last forty years or so. But it is reasonable

4. The Chinese note of 16 November declared: "However when the Chinese Government actually exercised its sovereignty rights, and began to liberate the Tibetan people and drive out foreign forces and influences to ensure that the Tibetan people will be free from aggression and will realize regional autonomy and religious freedom, the Indian Government attempted to influence and obstruct the exercise of its sovereignty rights in Tibet by the Chinese Government."

5. On 17 November, Panikkar was advised "to draw the attention immediately of the Chinese Foreign Office to the use by oversight" in the *aide memoire* of 26 August of Chinese "sovereignty" and that the correct phrase was "suzerainty" as used in the latest message to China on 1 November.

to assume from the very nature of Tibetan geography, terrain and climate, that a large measure of autonomy is almost inevitable. It may of course be that this autonomous Tibet is controlled by communist elements in Tibet. I imagine however that it is, on the whole, more likely that what will be attempted will be a pro-communist China administration rather than a communist one.

10. If world war comes, then all kinds of difficult and intricate problems arise and each one of these problems will be inter-related with others. Even the question of defence of India assumes a different shape and cannot be isolated from other world factors. I think that it is exceedingly unlikely that we may have to face any real military invasion from the Chinese side, whether in peace or in war, in the foreseeable future. I base this conclusion on a consideration of various world factors. In peace, such an invasion would undoubtedly lead to world war. China, though internally big, is in a way amorphous and easily capable of being attacked, on its sea coasts and by air. In such a war, China would have its main front in the south and east and it will be fighting for its very existence against powerful enemies. It is inconceivable that it should divert its forces and its strength across the inhospitable terrain of Tibet and undertake a wild adventure across the Himalayas. Any such attempt will greatly weaken its capacity to meet its real enemies on other fronts. Thus I rule out any major attack on India by China. I think these considerations should be borne in mind, because there is far too much loose talk about China attacking and overrunning India. If we lose our sense of perspective and world strategy and give way to unreasoning fears, then any policy that we might have is likely to fail.

11. While there is, in my opinion, practically no chance of a major attack on India by China, there are certainly chances of gradual infiltration across our border and possibly of entering and taking possession of disputed territory, if there is no obstruction to this happening. We must therefore take all necessary precautions to prevent this. But, again, we must differentiate between these precautions and those that might be necessary to meet a real attack.

12. If we really feared an attack and had to make full provision for it, this would cast an intolerable burden on us, financial and otherwise, and it would weaken our general defence position. There are limits beyond which we cannot go at least for some years, and a spreading out of our army in distant frontiers would be bad from every military or strategic point of view.

13. In spite of our desire to settle any points at issue between us and Pakistan, and developing peaceful relations with it, the fact remains that our major possible enemy is Pakistan. This has compelled us to think of our defence mainly in terms of Pakistan's aggression. If we begin to think of and prepare for China's aggression in the same way, we would weaken considerably on the Pakistan side. We might well be got in a pincer movement. It is interesting



to note that Pakistan is taking a great deal of interest, from this point of view, in developments in Tibet. Indeed it has been discussed in the Pakistan press that the new danger from Tibet to India might help them to settle the Kashmir problem according to their wishes.<sup>6</sup> Pakistan has absolutely nothing in common with China or Tibet. But if we fall out completely with China, Pakistan will undoubtedly try to take advantage of this, politically or otherwise. The position of India thus will be bad from a defence point of view. We cannot have all the time two possible enemies on either side of India. This danger will not be got over, even if we increase our defence forces or even if other foreign countries help us in arming. The measure of safety that one gets by increasing the defence apparatus is limited by many factors. But whatever that measure of safety might be, strategically we would be in an unsound position and the burden of this will be very great on us. As it is, we are facing enormous difficulties, financial, economic, etc.

14. The idea that communism inevitably means expansion and war, or, to put it more precisely, that Chinese communism means inevitably an expansion towards India, is rather naive. It may mean that in certain circumstances. Those circumstances would depend upon many factors, which I need not go into here. The danger really is not from military invasion but from infiltration of men and ideas. The ideas are there already and can only be countered by other ideas. Communism is an important element in the situation. But, by our attaching too great importance to it in this context, we are likely to misjudge of the situation from other and more important angles.

15. In a long-term view, India and China are two of the biggest countries of Asia bordering on each other and both with certain expansive tendencies, because of their vitality. If their relations are bad, this will have a serious effect not only on both of them but on Asia as a whole. It would affect our future for a long time. If a position arises in which China and India are inveterately hostile to each other, like France and Germany, then there will be repeated wars bringing destruction to both. The advantage will go to other countries. It is interesting to note that both the U.K. and the U.S.A. appear to be anxious to add to the unfriendliness of India and China towards each other. It is also interesting to find that the U.S.S.R. does not view with favour any friendly relations between India and China. These are long-term reactions which one can fully understand, because India and China at peace with each other would make a vast difference to the whole set-up and balance of the world. Much of course depends upon the development of either country and how far

6. For example, *Dawn* of 12 November published a poem, 'Tibet and Kashmir', and commented: "the passion which has inspired his (poet's) muse to sing a poem of praise to "liberators of Tibet" and to let his despairing mind dwell wistfully on thoughts of some such "liberation" for his own overrun and beleaguered motherland cannot but touch one's heart..."



communism in China will mould the Chinese people. Even so, these processes are long-range ones and in the long run it is fairly safe to assume that hundreds of millions of people will not change their essential characteristics.

16. These arguments lead to the conclusion that while we should be prepared, to the best of our ability, for all contingencies, the real protection that we should seek is some kind of understanding of China. If we have not got that, then both our present and our future are imperilled and no distant Power can save us. I think on the whole that China desires this too for obvious reasons. If this is so, then we should fashion our present policy accordingly.

17. We cannot save Tibet, as we should have liked to do, and our very attempts to save it might well bring greater trouble to it. It would be unfair to Tibet for us to bring this trouble upon her without having the capacity to help her effectively. It may be possible, however, that we might be able to help Tibet to retain a large measure of her autonomy. That would be good for Tibet and good for India. As far as I can see, this can only be done on the diplomatic level and by avoidance of making the present tension between India and China worse.

18. What then should be our instructions to B.N. Rau? From the messages he has sent us, it appears that no member of the Security Council shows any inclination to sponsor Tibet's appeal and that there is little likelihood of the matter being considered by the Council. We have said that we are not going to sponsor this appeal, but if it comes up, we shall state our viewpoint. This viewpoint cannot be one of full support of the Tibetan appeal, because that goes far and claims full independence. We may say that whatever might have been acknowledged in the past about China's sovereignty or suzerainty, recent events have deprived China of the right to claim that. There may be some moral basis for this argument. But it will not take us or Tibet very far. It will only hasten the downfall of Tibet. No outsider will be able to help her and China, suspicious and apprehensive of these tactics, will make sure of much speedier and fuller possession of Tibet than she might otherwise have done. We shall thus not only fail in our endeavour but at the same time have really a hostile China on our door-step.

19. I think that in no event should we sponsor Tibet's appeal. I would personally think that it would be a good thing if that appeal is not heard in the Security Council or the General Assembly. If it is considered there, there is bound to be a great deal of bitter speaking and accusation, which will worsen the situation as regards Tibet, as well as the possibility of widespread war, without helping it in the least. It must be remembered that neither the U.K. nor the U.S.A., nor indeed any other Power, is particularly interested in Tibet or the future of that country. What they are interested in is embarrassing China. Our interest, on the other hand, is Tibet, and if we cannot serve that interest, we fail.

20. Therefore, it will be better not to discuss Tibet's appeal in the U.N. Suppose, however, that it comes up for discussion, in spite of our not wishing this, what then? I would suggest that our representative should state our case as moderately as possible and ask the Security Council or the Assembly to give expression to their desire that the Sino-Tibetan question should be settled peacefully and that Tibet's autonomy should be respected and maintained. Any particular reference to an Article of the Charter of the U.N. might tie us up in difficulties and lead to certain consequences later which may prove highly embarrassing for us. Or a resolution of the U.N. might just be a dead letter, which also will be bad.

21. If my general argument is approved then we can frame our reply to China's note accordingly.

#### 14. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram 445 dated 17th November.<sup>2</sup> We doubt whether a discussion of Tibetan problem in General Assembly or in Security Council will yield any useful result. We therefore advised Tibetan Government against it when they first proposed appeal to U.N. Subsequently, when Chinese troops marched into Tibet proper, we told Tibetan Government that if they so chose, they could prefer appeal to U.N. We could not, however, sponsor such an appeal, though we might support it generally. We cannot go back on our assurance and have, therefore, to support inclusion of proposal for consideration by U.N. We are anxious to avoid recrimination or strong language which might come in the way of peaceful settlement. Last note to us from China, though same in content as previous one, was more friendly in tone.

2. We have already sent you a copy of Tibetan precis which gives background of problem and have indicated our general lines of approach. We cannot, consistently with previous declarations, support Tibetan claim to independence, though we can and should favour recognition of Tibetan autonomy. We should support appeal on broad ground that problem of Sino-Tibetan relations should be solved peacefully and not by resort to arms. Chinese Government have

1. New Delhi, 19 November 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. Rau stated that no member of the Security Council appeared to be inclined to sponsor the Tibetan appeal mainly on grounds of the doubtful status of Tibet and a general lack of knowledge about the problem, and asked for instructions in case the matter was brought up.



repeatedly expressed themselves in favour of Tibetan autonomy, but of course we do not know what their idea of autonomy is.

3. As soon as you know for certain that matter will come up in Assembly, please let us know and we shall send you fuller brief. We do not think that legal arguments will be helpful or that Assembly should attempt more than appeal to two parties to come to a peaceful settlement. Condemnation of China will not help Tibet; and neither Security Council nor Assembly is in any position to render physical aid to Tibet.

## 15. The Indo-Tibetan Boundary<sup>1</sup>

Tibet is contiguous to India from the region of Ladakh to the boundary of Nepal and from Bhutan to the Irrawady-Salween divide in Assam. The frontier from Bhutan eastwards has been clearly defined by the McMahon line which was fixed by the Simla Convention of 1914. The frontier from Ladakh to Nepal is defined chiefly by long usage and custom....

That is what the honourable Member is suggesting.<sup>2</sup> Our maps show that the McMahon line is our boundary and that is our boundary—map or no map. That fact remains and we stand by that boundary and we will not allow anybody to come across that boundary.

1. Answer to a question in Parliament whether India had any well-defined boundary with Tibet, 20 November 1950. *Parliamentary Debates, Official Report*, 1950, Vol. V, Part I, cols 155–156. Extracts.
2. In a supplementary question, Mahavir Tyagi had asked whether it was a fact that the Survey of India maps showed India's boundary "beyond the boundaries shown in the latest Chinese map, namely, extending up to the Brahmaputra banks near Sadia."

## 16. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram No. 17-DGA dated 18th November. Tibet.

2. Draft resolution<sup>2</sup> of El Salvador completely ignores realities of situation and overlooks fact that only result of passing such a resolution will be to

1. New Delhi, 20 November 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. El Salvador in a resolution presented on 18 November asked the General Assembly to condemn the unprovoked aggression against Tibet by Chinese forces and to establish a committee to decide what measures could be taken by the Assembly.



precipitate conquest of Tibet and destruction of Tibetan independence and perhaps even autonomy. We cannot possibly support it or even adopt merely negative attitude. We would therefore suggest that delegate of El Salvador should be induced to modify his resolution so as to limit it to expression of concern of General Assembly at recent developments in Tibet and call upon parties to come to a settlement by peaceful means and not by force. If he is unwilling to do so, you should try to have amendment moved on line suggested.

## 17. Cable to K.M. Panikkar<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram 303 of 19th November. I quite appreciate considerations which you have put before us.<sup>2</sup> I also understand, though I do not agree with, Chinese Government's fears and apprehensions.<sup>3</sup> I want to make it clear that I am convinced of importance of Indo-Chinese friendship both from short-term and long-term points of view. We have laboured to that end, but military operations against Tibet came as shock to us and to Indian opinion. During past two years or more we have consistently adopted policy in Asian matters, such as Indonesia, Indo-China, China, which has been opposed to Anglo-American policy. We would have thought that this was evidence enough of our independent policy. In regard to Tibet no country has influenced us in the slightest. But, of course, India has special feelings towards Tibet.

2. Even now we are anxious to continue friendly relations with China. We did not desire Tibetan issue to be argued before the United Nations, but when it comes up we have to say something. We do not agree with El Salvador resolution of condemnation. We cannot support fully Tibetan appeal. Hence our instructions to Rau of which we have informed you.

1. New Delhi, 20 November 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Panikkar stated that the controversy with China over Tibet was a "result of misunderstanding on both sides, on their side based on our acceptance of their sovereignty and our side by a feeling that China brushed aside discourteously our friendly advice." He added that in view of the threatening international situation, any further straining of relations with China on the issue of Tibetan appeal in the United Nations was to be avoided.
3. Panikkar wrote that the Chinese perception about India going back on her assurances of recognising the territorial integrity of China should be seen in the context of their "genuine fear" of a threat to their security stemming from: military survey of Formosa by the U.S. during the last war; existence of an American air base in Bangkok; and denial by Lhasa even of Chinese suzerainty, and its approaches to foreign Powers for recognition of Tibet's sovereignty.

3. Regarding use of word "sovereignty" or "suzerainty", question is rather academic.<sup>4</sup> We have always laid stress on autonomy of Tibet. Autonomy plus sovereignty leads to suzerainty. Words are not important. What we do attach value to is autonomy of Tibet. We feel that as this matter may come up before the United Nations or might be otherwise raised, it is desirable to make position clear to Chinese Government lest they may accuse us of misleading them later.

4. We realise importance of McMahon line by which we are going to stand anyhow. We are taking necessary steps on border.

5. Our present policy is primarily based on avoidance of world war, and secondly on maintenance of honourable and peaceful relations with China. These relations inevitably will depend, to some extent, upon Chinese policy in Tibet. If peaceful settlement is arrived at there and Tibet's autonomy recognised, this should meet Chinese demands and satisfy, more or less, both Tibet and India.

6. As you informed us, Chinese policy underwent vital change after collapse of North Korean forces. We supported Chinese contention that the 38th parallel should not be crossed. Now China appears to have made up her mind about war. This realisation has made Western Powers appreciate dangers of situation and U.K. is trying hard to find way out.<sup>5</sup> We have indicated to you U.K. approach which seems to us reasonable. Bevin has sent special message to Chou En-lai through their Charge d'Affaires.<sup>6</sup> He has also addressed me and asked for our support. U.K. are anxious to have frank talks with Chinese delegation going to U.N.<sup>7</sup> and have deputed special officer Lamb<sup>8</sup> to New York for this

4. Panikkar stated that the Indian *aide memoire* of 26 August 1950, defining India's policy as "Tibetan autonomy within framework of Chinese sovereignty", and his own discussions with the Chinese authorities based on the same phraseology, had helped China justify its military action in Tibet. The Indian note of 1 November 1950, substituting "suzerainty" for "sovereignty", however, led Peking to attribute the modification to outside influence. He wondered whether subsequent explanation by India that the earlier use of the word "sovereignty" was by oversight would serve any purpose.

5. On 20 November, a British Foreign Office statement said that the British Government had been in consultation with the U.S., French and Commonwealth Governments to find a solution to the Korean problem.

6. The British Charge d'Affaires handed over the message to the Chinese Foreign Office on 22 November. The message reaffirmed that the U.N. action in Korea was not a threat to Chinese security and in no way endangered legitimate Chinese interests in that area.

7. A Chinese delegation arrived in New York on 24 November to appear before the Security Council to support its Government's charges of U.S. aggression against Formosa.

8. Sir Lionel Henry Lamb; served in British consular service in China, 1921-38; British Counsellor, Chungking, 1945; Minister, Nanking, 1947-49; Charge d'Affaires, Peking, 1951-53; Ambassador to Switzerland, 1953-58.



purpose. Proposal for demilitarization of part of North Korea above the 40th parallel is strictly temporary. This should not be mentioned at present to Chinese authorities, but that is main basis of approach. Also it is hoped to associate China with discussions on future of Korea.

7. Details apart, this appears to be an earnest and hopeful attempt at peaceful settlement and avoidance of war. We suggest to you to support this approach generally in best way you can. In view of dangers of present situation and drift to war, any attempt which prevents war and safeguards interests of China should be welcomed by Chinese Government. We think that U.K. proposal aims at this and also leads to settlement of Korean problem in cooperation with parties concerned.

8. We suggest to you to clarify our position to Chinese Government both in regard to Tibet and wider issues in as friendly a manner as possible.

## 18. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram 455 dated 21st November. We are entirely in favour of deferring consideration of Tibet question because of various developments, more particularly arrival of Peking representatives. It is of vital importance that every effort be made to lessen war tension, more especially in Far East where situation is dangerous. We understand that U.K. and U.S.A. are also exploring methods of dealing with Korean situation so as to remove Chinese fears and relieve tension. In this context any step taken in United Nations which adds to bitterness and worsens situation is to be avoided. Debate on Tibet at this stage is likely to be an occasion for strong language and condemnation which will make possibility of settlement by negotiations of both Tibetan and wider problem much more difficult, if not impossible. We still cling to faint hope of such settlement. Therefore our policy and procedure should be based on this approach.

2. We are committed to giving qualified support to Tibet in United Nations in terms already indicated to you and when occasion arises this has to be done. But we do not approve of El Salvador's resolution and cannot support Tibet's appeal in regard to independence. We can only press both parties to settle by peaceful negotiation. You should therefore support move for postponement and make clear our attitude to entire problem.<sup>2</sup>

1. New Delhi, 23 November 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. On 24 November, the General Committee of the General Assembly agreed to postpone action indefinitely on the Tibetan Government's appeal after the Indian delegate had told the Committee that India was convinced that a peaceful settlement could be reached between Tibet and the People's Republic of China.



3. You should certainly meet Chinese delegation. I should like Vijayalakshmi also to see them.<sup>3</sup> Please repeat this telegram to her:

3. Rau met the Chinese delegation on 1 December. Vijayalakshmi Pandit called on the leader of the delegation on 7 December.

## 19. Cable to K.M. Panikkar<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram 304 of 20th November.<sup>2</sup> As we have informed you, U.K. and possibly U.S.A. are trying to find some way out of deadlock in Korea and making proposals to that end. We do not know if this will succeed. But every effort should be made to lessen war tension in wider interests of world peace. Much depends upon talks which will take place with Chinese delegation at Lake Success. We understand that U.K. and U.S.A. are trying to defer consideration of Tibet in U.N. because of pending arrival of Peking representatives. In these circumstances we are strongly of opinion that any discussion in U.N. which raises passion and increases tension should be avoided. We feel that if Chinese Government could state clearly that they have every intention of settling problem of Tibet by negotiation and not by force and are prepared to have such negotiations with Tibetan representatives, keeping in view both Tibet's autonomy and her historical connection with China, this would go long way in easing tension and clearing the atmosphere. We do not know if Chinese Government, in their present frame of mind, are likely to agree. If you see no objection, you can put this forward entirely as a personal suggestion from you and not as proposal from Government of India.

2. We have asked Rau and Vijayalakshmi to contact Chinese delegation soon after arrival in New York.

1. New Delhi, 23 November 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. Panikkar reported that the official Chinese newspaper, the *Kwanming Daily*, had in a recent article pleaded for Sino-Indian understanding saying that India should carry on negotiations with China through diplomatic channels if she desired to retain her "normal commercial and diplomatic relations with Tibet." He suggested that since China had in principle recognised India's interests in Tibet and had left the door open for direct negotiations, the opportunity should not be missed, as a settlement with China would not only be in the interests of India but "those Tibetans who have in the past been friendly to us."

12

NEPAL





## 1. Cable to C.P.N. Singh<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram dated 27 October.<sup>2</sup> We suggest that you should reply to the King as follows:

"I have been greatly distressed by what Your Majesty has said about your relations with your Prime Minister and the danger that you apprehend to your personal safety. I can assure you that, in case of need, this Embassy will give you sanctuary which international law recognises in such cases and all the protection that we can."

We shall have to consider what action should be taken in case the King seeks sanctuary in the Embassy. We can perhaps arrange for a plane to be in Kathmandu to be used if need arises. Question will however arise how King can be moved from the Embassy to the airfield. We should be glad to have your suggestions.

Mention has been made in your telegram regarding inhuman tortures on prominent political personalities with a view to extracting confessions from them. We cannot of course quote the source of this statement. If you have other facts to bear out this statement, you should make a serious protest to the Nepal Government.<sup>3</sup>

1. New Delhi, 28 October 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. C.P.N. Singh, India's Ambassador in Nepal, stated that the King had written to him about the growing discontent of the people of Nepal with the present autocratic and tyrannical system, which suited Maharaja Mohan Shamsher, his Prime Minister, with whom his relations had become strained. As the people were looking upto him for relief the Prime Minister was growing more inimical towards him, which made him feel anxious about the safety of his life. He requested the Ambassador to offer protection to him and his family if the need arose.
3. Singh informed Nehru on 3 November that he had conveyed to the Maharaja India's grave concern about brutal treatment of political prisoners. The Maharaja admitted that Sunderraj Challise, Ganesh Man Singh and others had been whipped in order to extract confessions from them in connection with a plot to murder him, and considered them to be terrorists and not political prisoners.

## 2. To Rajendra Prasad<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
November 7, 1950

My dear Mr President,

I returned from Bombay and Poona this evening. During my brief absence, certain important developments took place in Nepal.

I have on several occasions informed you of the difficult situation in Nepal. There was a popular agitation going on for a change in the administration and reforms and this agitation sometimes was on the verge of organised resistance, peaceful or other.

Apart from this, there has been a great deal of friction for sometime past between the King and the Prime Minister.<sup>2</sup> Efforts were made by the Prime Minister to get the King to abdicate, but the latter refused to do so. A few days ago we received a secret message from the King to the effect that he may have to seek shelter at our Embassy at Kathmandu. We informed our Ambassador to say in reply that if he so desired, we would give him that shelter.<sup>3</sup>

Yesterday the King, accompanied by many members of his family, came to our Embassy in Kathmandu and asked for shelter, which our Ambassador gave him and his family.<sup>4</sup> This brought about a crisis in the relations of the King with his Prime Minister. The Prime Minister sent his son to him to enquire why he had taken this step.<sup>5</sup> The King replied that for sometime past he had been wanting to go to India for treatment, both for himself and some members of his family, but the Government had refused him permission. Pressure was brought upon him again to abdicate, but he refused.<sup>6</sup>

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Differences between King Tribhuvan and Mohan Shamsher were partly due to the former's support to the progressive groups in Nepal and his desire to introduce responsible government in his country without delay.
3. See the preceding item.
4. Early in the morning of 6 November 1950 King Tribhuvan, his two queens and three sons, and other members of the family, took shelter in the Indian Embassy.
5. Bijaya Shamsher, the younger son of Mohan Shamsher, was deputed to the Indian Embassy on 6 November to request the King to return to the royal palace but the King refused to see him.
6. On 7 November, an emergency session of Nepal's Parliament and a *bharadari* (an assembly consisting of the nobility, *rajgurus* and state officials) declared that King Tribhuvan and his family had by their action forfeited their right to the throne. Prince Birendra, the minor grandson of the King, should be given a chance to return, failing which the next rightful heir should be proclaimed the King of Nepal. Bijaya Shamsher met the King at the Indian Embassy on 7 November with this message but he refused to abdicate and to allow Birendra to return to the palace.



I understand informally that one of the King's grandsons, a baby of about three years of age, has been crowned as King<sup>7</sup> on the assumption that the King has abdicated. This appears to us to be quite irregular.

We have informed our Ambassador to tell the King that we shall gladly give him facilities for coming to India for treatment. The Prime Minister is also to be informed of this. If the King and his family come here, we shall naturally treat them as our guests. There is no doubt that they will come here, unless the present Government in Nepal prevents this.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

7. Prince Gyanendra, the second son of Crown Prince Mahendra, was installed as the King of Nepal on 7 November 1950.

### 3. Cable to C.P.N. Singh<sup>1</sup>

Unable to contact you on telephone tonight. Issuing brief press statement to effect that King has taken shelter in our Embassy and desires to come to India for treatment. Because of objection of his Government to this, he has sought your assistance in the matter.

2. We think that King and his family should come to Delhi as soon as possible. Aircraft can be sent immediately on your demand. Please inform King that Government of India will gladly accede to his request to come to India for treatment and are prepared to make necessary arrangements for visit to Delhi for this purpose. King and his family will be our guests in Delhi.

3. Inform Prime Minister that Government of India, having received His Majesty the King's request to come to India for treatment, have gladly agreed to his coming here and to make necessary arrangements for the purpose. King has been informed accordingly.

4. Please inform us immediately when aircraft required. Other important questions that arise will be dealt with later after King's arrival here. Meanwhile stress should be laid on his coming here with family for treatment. We cannot of course recognize any change in kingship, but this matter should be referred to us formally for consideration<sup>2</sup> and you need take no steps about it at present.

1. New Delhi, 7 November 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. The Government of India was officially informed of the installation of the boy King on 10 November 1950.



#### 4. Cable to C.P.N. Singh<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram 145.<sup>2</sup> Please inform His Highness that we regard the tone of his communications to you and the behaviour of his Government as unfriendly and likely to lead to serious consequences unless there is more rational approach to situation. We wish to maintain good relations with Nepal but will not suffer insult. King sought refuge in Embassy of his own accord and we consider it a point of honour to protect his person and persons of those members of his family who have accompanied him to Embassy. Our request that King and his party should be allowed to come to India has no political purpose. Until we reach a decision on the question of recognition, the King to whom you were accredited must remain King to the Government of India. We would repeat the request that if complications which may gravely affect relations between India and Nepal are to be avoided, the best course would be for the Maharaja to let the King and his party travel to India.

2. The refusal to allow our I.N.A. plane to operate tomorrow according to the terms of agreement between India and Nepal is a breach of that agreement and we shall take such action in the matter as the terms of the agreement and international usage justify and permit.

3. We should like you to telegraph or telephone immediately if any threat of violence develops.<sup>3</sup> It may be premature, without overt evidence of intent to use violence against Embassy or King, to warn Maharaja of consequences.

1. New Delhi, 8 November 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. C.P.N. Singh telegraphed on 8 November that he had informed the Maharaja about the King going to India for treatment but the Ambassador was told that the Maharaja had taken exception to the Government of India being informed about the King's request without consulting him and to the King being addressed without the prefix "Ex". Considering this as involving "a grave constitutional issue", to prevent the King's departure his Government had refused permission for landing of aircraft in Nepal, including the weekly service of I.N.A. on 9 November.

3. C.P.N. Singh had stated in his telegram, "From all indications it appears likely they will not hesitate to resort to violence if need be."

## 5. The Situation in Nepal<sup>1</sup>

The situation in Nepal is still confusing and it is difficult to prophesy.<sup>2</sup> We are likely to have to face rather difficult problems in the near future. General Bijaya<sup>3</sup> is said to be coming here in a day or two for conversations with us. We ought to be fairly clear in our minds what line we should adopt. That line should not involve any final commitment at this stage.

2. It seems to me clear that the mass of the population is likely to side with the King and the Nepali Congress. Newspapers report that Nepali students from Banaras are going to Nepal to join the fight on behalf of the Congress. In Kathmandu also popular feeling is in favour of the King.

3. But the real crux of the matter lies in the attitude of the Nepal army. If a considerable portion of this army joins the Nepali Congress or the insurgents, then the Rana regime collapses completely. If, however, most of the army stands by the Prime Minister's party, then the struggle will continue. There will be patches of Nepal territory held by the insurgents. It will be difficult for the army to spread out all over Nepal. Undoubtedly that would be a blow to the Nepali Congress and would mean a prolonged struggle. Probably they have no considerable resources to carry this on.

4. The contemplated counter-attack on Birganj tonight has some significance. There are supposed to be two thousand soldiers marching against Birganj. If these stand firm for the Rana, then they ought to have no great difficulty in capturing Birganj. That would be a blow to the Nepali Congress, though that will certainly not end the struggle, as there are many other areas where the writ of the Nepal Government has ceased to run. If, on the other hand, there is disaffection even in these Nepalese troops and some of them go over to the other side or do not fight properly, that would be a great blow to the Kathmandu Government.

5. I have told the Chief Minister of Bihar<sup>4</sup> that the Nepalese Government troops should not be allowed to enter our territory in pursuit or otherwise.

1. Note to the Secretary-General, M.E.A., 12 November 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. On 11 November 1950, after the Maharaja eventually allowed King Tribhuvan and his family to leave, an I.A.F. plane brought them to Delhi, where they were received as State guests. The same day, Nepali Congress volunteers made a surprise attack on Birganj in south central Nepal, captured the Governor of the town and proclaimed a revolutionary government from there. The Nepali Congress volunteers also launched, from Jogbani in India, an attack on Biratnagar, an industrial township in the eastern Terai, but it was repulsed by the troops of the Nepal Government.
3. Bijaya Shamsheer Jung Bahadur Rana, Director-General of Foreign Affairs, Nepal.
4. Sri Krishna Sinha.



6. Events are developing so rapidly that within a few days we might get some indication of the strength of the two parties. In any event the Rana's regime has been badly shaken. It can win by military means and terroristic tactics. Even so, it seems rather doubtful that it will be in a position to function as a stable Government and continuous trouble will be occurring in various outlying parts of Nepal.

7. It is clear that we cannot support any going back to the old regime, as it was. Although we have taken no final decision, to some extent we are being progressively committed to the King. The reception we have given him here is itself some commitment. We cannot therefore easily go back upon it without trouble for ourselves. Public opinion in India will resent our going back upon it very much because there can be no doubt that that public opinion is in favour of the Nepali Congress. No decision on this point is necessary at this stage, but some line will have to be adopted in our talks with General Bijaya or others.

8. Generally speaking, it seems to me that our line should be that the King should continue as such and that we do not recognise the hurried crowning of his baby grandson. Further far-reaching political reforms are essential and inevitable now. What the nature of these should be, is a matter for careful consideration and, when the time comes, we shall have to bring in the Nepali Congress into the picture. They are the only organised body that can attempt to shoulder the burden and control the situation.

9. What will be the position of the Rana family then? I do not think it is possible, in those circumstances, for the present Prime Minister to continue in his office. It may, however, be possible for some other member of the Rana family to be Prime Minister, but, obviously, with greatly restricted powers. The present so-called Constitution of Nepal or convention will have to go. Regarding the future Constitution, some kind of a constituent assembly might be necessary and appears desirable. But meanwhile, there will have to be interim arrangements and an interim government, which might be chosen from some members of the Rana family and some Nepali Congress people. Naturally, the former should be such as have good relations with the latter.

10. These are some odd ideas for us to develop in our minds and to serve as some kind of rough indication for our talks. In the event of the Nepali Congress being more or less crushed and the Rana regime controlling the situation fully, the position will be more difficult. On the one hand, the Rana Government in Nepal will become more obstinate and difficult to deal with; on the other, we can hardly throw overboard the King and accept things as they were in Nepal. We have, therefore, to throw our full moral weight on the side of a radical change and far-reaching reforms and make it clear that nothing short of this can satisfy us. We do not wish to impose anything on Nepal, but we can, without impropriety, insist on a constituent assembly properly elected.



## 6. Telegram to Sri Krishna Sinha<sup>1</sup>

Regarding Nepal border situation, please note that we cannot allow Indian territory to be used as base for operations in Nepal by Nepali Congress.<sup>2</sup> No armed raids can be permitted from Indian territory. Any armed men coming from Nepal to Indian territory, whether Nepalese Government soldiers or Nepali Congress volunteers, should be disarmed on entry into India.

It is reported that Nepal Government Rest House at Raxaul in Indian territory is being used as office by leaders of Nepali Congress and looted treasure from Birganj brought there.<sup>3</sup> This cannot be permitted. Any looted treasure must be taken possession of and kept safely till further directions are issued for disposal.

1. New Delhi, 13 November 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. The attack on Birganj on 11 November was reportedly led by 200 armed men of the Nepali Congress who had come from Calcutta and had collected at Muzaffarpur. Leaflets on behalf of the Nepali Congress were also reported to have been dropped on Birganj on 10 November from a plane belonging to Mahabir Shamsheer Jung Bahadur Rana and operating from Patna airport.
3. The Director, Intelligence Bureau, reported on 13 November that Subarna Shamsheer, B.P. Koirala and Tej Bahadur had set up their offices in the Rest House and that rupees twenty-six lakhs in cash, three boxes of gold bullion and two boxes of sovereigns, believed to have been removed from the Birganj treasury by volunteers of the Nepali Congress, had been brought there.

## 7. To C.R. Attlee<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
13th November, 1950

Dear Attlee,

Just as I returned here there was a further telegram about Nepal.

It is now ascertained that the attack on Birganj on the 11th November was made by local people including fifty Nepalese soldiers in barracks there who were apparently supporters of the Nepali Congress. There appear to have been also some 150 or so "underground" Congress workers in Birganj. These 200 attacked the barracks at 2 a.m. on the 11th. Sten guns and other arms were then taken from the barracks and used later.

1. File No. 159/51, High Commission (London), M.E.A.

From all this it appears that neither men nor arms were taken from the Indian side of the border. It is considered that the apparent success of the surprise attack may be due to its being internal and sudden.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 8. Record of Talk with King Tribhuvan<sup>1</sup>

I had a long interview, lasting an hour and a half, with the King of Nepal this evening. I spoke to him fully and frankly and explained to him the position of the Government of India. I told him that we had always been anxious to see the growth of democratic government in Nepal and had repeatedly advised the Prime Minister of Nepal to that effect. Unfortunately he had not taken our advice.

2. With some of the people connected with the Nepali Congress, we had had old contacts and we had generally agreed with their desire for reforms in Nepal. We had made it clear, however, that we could not favour or give any help to any movement connected with violence. We had, therefore, issued instructions that no part of our territory should be used as a base for any operations in or against Nepal. We would also not permit any raids or armed bands to go there from our territory. At the same time we would prevent Nepalese soldiers or any armed bands coming from Nepal to India.

3. I explained to him that from every point of view it was desirable for us not to get mixed up with this affair. It was desirable also for him (the King) not to get entangled and I would advise him not to see the leaders of the Nepali Congress. Or else, it will be thought that he is directing this movement from Delhi. For this reason also, I had no intention of meeting these people.

4. It seemed to me, I told him, that these people were not showing any marked signs of wisdom. It would be embarrassing for him and for us to get mixed up with them. We wanted to keep clear of this, but naturally our sympathies were on the popular side and we were anxious that this kind of civil war should end as soon as possible. If we can help in bringing this to an end, we shall certainly do so.

5. I explained our position and our advice to him at some length and I think he understood the force of it and promised to abide by it. I told him also not to have any dealings with the press.

1. Note to the Secretary-General, M.E.A., 13 November 1950. J.N. Collection.





WITH KING TRIBHUVAN OF NEPAL, NEW DELHI, 11 NOVEMBER 1950



1. I am amazed at the demands made. Evidently he & his colleagues are suffering under a grave misapprehension and have no conception of what the Govt of India is or how Govts function.

2. The Govt of India still recognizes the King of Nepal as such and at the same time is in normal relations with the Nepal Govt. ~~But~~ They have no connection with the Nepal Congress and cannot possibly give any recognition to it. ~~as they~~ ~~like~~ ~~the~~ Nor can they recognize any thing that the Nepali Congress may set up ~~at the~~ now.

3. The Govt of India is not at war with Nepal and cannot give any armed help to any insurrection. Their attitude is one of non-interference and preserving their own territory being used by either party.

3. Mr Kowala should clearly understand that he & his friends are not serving the cause of Nepal's freedom or reform by embarrassing the King or the Govt of India. Many of the activities of the leaders of the Nepali Congress have been exceedingly unwise and adventurous which can

6. I then asked him what his own ideas were about any future set-up in Nepal. He had no clear ideas and talked vaguely about democracy. I told him I agreed, but how exactly was it going to come about? I suggested that sometime or other there should be a constituent assembly, though how it should be elected, I could not quite say at the moment. Even so, the question of the interim arrangement would arise.

7. I left him to think out these matters.

8. I learnt, almost immediately after his departure, that some of the leaders of the Nepali Congress had come by a special plane<sup>2</sup> and had been interrogated at Willingdon airfield. There are two trunkfuls of currency notes, amounting to rupees thirty-five lakhs. This had been taken from the Birganj treasury. Our police took charge of these trunks and, I believe, after counting them and taking some statements,<sup>3</sup> allowed these people to go.

9. It is necessary to have a meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committee to consider the Nepal situation. Our general attitude thus far has been rather passive and we have waited on events. Perhaps that was inevitable and perhaps we might continue to do so for a day or two more. I think, however, that fairly soon we should make some positive suggestions for stopping this fighting.

2. M.P. Koirala, President of the Nepali Congress, Subarna Shamsher, Mahabir Shamsher and B.P. Koirala arrived at New Delhi from Patna by a chartered plane on 13 November 1950.
3. B.P. Koirala claimed that the money had been brought to Delhi to be handed over to King Tribhuvan as the constitutional head of Nepal and to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Rana Government. The Ministry of External Affairs notified on 14 November that the boxes seized from the plane were being kept in the safe custody of the Government of India.

## 9. Message to B.P. Koirala<sup>1</sup>

I am amazed at the demands made.<sup>2</sup> Evidently he and his colleagues are under a grave misapprehension and have no conception of what the Government of India is or how Governments function.

1. Note to Private Secretary directing him to convey this message orally to B.P. Koirala, 14 November 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. On the morning of 14 November Koirala had seen Nehru's Secretary and hoped that the Government of India would give immediate recognition to the government to be formed by the Nepali Congress under the aegis of King Tribhuvan. He also gave a list of military equipment which he wished the Government of India to supply to them and asked that the Gurkha troops serving the Indian Army be allowed to act as volunteers on behalf of King Tribhuvan. Koirala also sought an immediate interview with Nehru.

2. The Government of India still recognises the King of Nepal as such and at the same time is in normal relations with the Nepal Government. They have no connection with the Nepali Congress and cannot possibly give any recognition to it. Nor can they recognise anything that the Nepali Congress may set up now.

3. The Government of India is not at war with Nepal and cannot give any armed help to any insurrection. Their attitude is one of non-intervention and preventing their own territory being used by either party.

4. Mr Koirala should clearly understand that he and his friends are not serving the cause of Nepal's freedom or reforms by embarrassing the King or the Government of India. Many of the activities of the leaders of the Nepali Congress have been exceedingly unwise and adventurous which can only injure their cause. Their coming here yesterday with looted treasure was very foolish and has embarrassed the Government of India.

5. Our advice is that they should keep away from the King and the Government here and none of them should remain in Delhi. If they remain here or function openly in Indian territory we may be compelled to restrict their activities.

6. The Government of India is anxious to find a way out for Nepal and to encourage the establishment of a liberal regime. They are prepared to help in this provided the Nepali Congress leaders do not act in a manner which embarrasses them. They are prepared to suggest to the Nepal Government that all fighting should end so that the matter might be considered peacefully and a way out be found.

7. In the circumstances I am unable to see Mr Koirala. The sooner he and his colleagues go away from Delhi the better.

## 10. To Govind Ballabh Pant<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

November 16, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

I am writing to you about the situation vis-a-vis Nepal. We have been in constant touch by telegram and we have indicated to you what our general attitude should be. Novel questions are continually arising. As a rule, when

1. J.N. Collection. A similar letter was sent to Sri Krishna Sinha.



any new situation arises, I would suggest to you to communicate with us, as indeed you have been doing. But I wish to explain more fully than we have done in our telegrams about the situation generally and our own views in regard to it.

2. Our sympathies are naturally with the progressive movement in Nepal. This is so not only because we think that political and economic progress is good in itself, but also because we feel that having regard to various developments in Central Asia, etc., it is important that Nepal should get out of its old rut and feudal regime. We have repeatedly impressed this upon the Prime Ministers of Nepal, but with little success. We have warned the present Prime Minister on several occasions that he will have to face trouble. His attitude has been not only unhelpful but most discouraging. Sometimes indeed it has not been wholly courteous. The result has been a growing tempo of repression in Nepal and a feeling of frustration among many people there. On the advent of independence in India, many people in Nepal and many Nepalese in India naturally looked towards India and thought that our advice would result in substantial changes there. We followed a strictly correct policy in regard to the Nepal Government and interfered in no way with them, except, as I have said above, by giving advice. The Nepal Government was at first rather apprehensive of what we might do to them. Having realised that we would confine ourselves to advice only, they lost that feeling of apprehension and ignored what we told them. When we had a treaty of friendship with Nepal early this year,<sup>2</sup> they utilised this to strengthen their own existing regime and generally made it known to people round about them that they had been too clever for the Government of India.

3. While this was their attitude towards us, they relied more and more on such foreign contacts as they were developing, in order to strengthen their regime. In particular, they relied upon the British Ambassador, who used to be the Government of India's representative there in earlier days and who is particularly reactionary in outlook and anti-Indian.<sup>3</sup> The British Ambassador, instead of supporting our advice in favour of reform, came in the way of it. This had an important influence on the present Rana regime in Nepal and made them less responsive to change.

4. While we are all in favour of change and any popular movement demanding change, we have naturally desired such change to take place by peaceful means. We made it clear to the Nepal Government repeatedly that we would not come in the way of any peaceful agitation for change in Nepal. But if anything against our law took place, we would naturally take action.

2. Signed on 31 July 1950.

3. George Arthur Falconer (1894-1981); served in Indian Army, 1917-43; British Minister in Nepal, 1944-47, and Ambassador in Nepal, 1947-51.

5. We have known for sometime past that things were coming to a head in Nepal. Indeed, within the last month, quite a large number of high-ranking officers and even members of the Rana family have been arrested and imprisoned. Our information has been that they have been tortured also. All we could do was again to press the Nepal Government to think in terms of reform. Some little while ago, they did introduce what they called reforms, but these were of no value at all. We knew also of the conflict between the King and the Prime Minister. The King in fact was kept almost in some kind of detention and had little freedom to contact people. He wanted to come to India for medical treatment as well as to meet people, but he was not allowed to do so. The King was supposed to be in favour of the popular movement. We realised that, in view of this conflict, there was a possibility of the King seeking shelter in our Embassy. If that happened, we could not refuse it. When the King actually came to our Embassy with his family, this was a surprise. I was away in Bombay then. The behaviour of the Nepal Government, during the next two or three days, was peculiar and far from friendly towards us. They refused to permit the King to come to India. However, when our Ambassador pointed out the consequences of such behaviour, they relented and the King was allowed to come. Meanwhile, the Nepal Government rushed through some kind of a ceremony of crowning a baby grandson of the King. The whole thing was irregular even from the point of view of the Nepal laws. They tried to make out at first that the King had abdicated or intended to abdicate. The King resolutely denied this and said that he had no such intention. We told the Nepal Government that we could not accept these changes and we would continue to recognise the King for the present at least and till we could consider these matters more fully.

6. These developments in Nepal obviously took even the Nepali Congress people by surprise. Indeed they appeared to have known nothing of the flight of the King to our Embassy till two days after it occurred. All this indicates that there were no contacts or coordination between the King's escape and the Nepali Congress, and much less with the Government of India. Soon after they heard of these developments, the Nepali Congress people appeared to have decided to strike a blow. They collected their people and attacked Birganj as well as some other points. In Birganj some of the Nepal soldiery joined them and the surprise attack in the middle of the night succeeded.<sup>4</sup> During the next two days or so, there was a good deal of confusion round about that border and your Government no doubt was put in some difficulty as to what should be done and what should not be done. The fault was not yours. Ultimately, we issued instructions to the two Governments especially

4. Seven hundred out of one thousand Nepal Government troops sent to Amlekhganj, twenty-five miles from Birganj, revolted and joined the insurgents.



concerned, Bihar and U.P. These instructions were not to allow armed people to come out of Nepal or to go into Nepal and not to allow Indian territory to be used as a base for operations in Nepal. We also issued instructions that no aircraft should go to Nepal without our permission, apart from the normal service, if that was resumed. Thus, we took an attitude of strict neutrality. so far as the inner troubles of Nepal were concerned.

7. The position was peculiar. We continue to recognise the King, when the Nepal Government has put someone else in his place. We continue to recognise the Nepal Government too and deal with them. The King was obviously in sympathy with the insurgents and the latter also said that they were in favour of the King. Although this position was very peculiar, from the point of view of constitutional law, some precedents, not exactly applicable of course, can be found for periods of transition like this. This position continues, though obviously it cannot continue as such indefinitely. It may, however, continue for some time.

8. The Nepali Congress people have behaved exceedingly foolishly in many respects. They were under a false impression that because we continued to recognise the King, and they were also in favour of the King, therefore we were going to support them actively in their campaign. In their folly, they not only looted the Birganj treasury but brought some of it to Delhi to present to the King. We took possession of this treasure in Delhi and in Bihar and we shall keep it under safe custody for the time being. We have now made it perfectly clear to these people that we shall act strictly in a manner so as not to get entangled in any way with their activities; that we shall not encourage any armed activities in our territory. We have also made it clear to the Nepal Government that we will not permit any of their soldiery to come to India by road or rail. In other words, we have maintained to some extent our attitude of neutrality in this struggle.

9. I might inform you that the Nepal Government asked us for armed assistance in quelling the disturbances. They also asked us for passage for their troops through Indian territory from one part of Nepal to another. Further they asked us for bomber aircraft to bomb their own people. We refused all these requests.

10. Thus, the present position is that while we do not permit any armed traffic between India and Nepal, unarmed people, medical missions or others can come from Nepal or go there from India.

11. It is difficult to prophesy what will happen. But it is clear to us that there can be and should be no going back to the old Rana regime in Nepal. As at present advised, we do not intend to give up our recognition of the old King. We have suggested to the Nepal Government that there should be a ceasefire and a peaceful consideration of the problems. We are prepared to help in this. We have had no answer from them yet.



12. It is probable that the Nepal Government might be able to recover towns or areas, which have passed out of their control, like Birganj, with the help of their military. But this does not mean that they will put an end to the insurrection. It is very difficult for them to guard their wide territories, especially the rural areas. The result is likely to be that the insurgents will be in possession of wide areas and may move about from place to place. In other words there will be no peace or stability in Nepal while this continues. It seems to me no easy matter for the Nepal Government to crush this movement completely. At the same time it is still less easy for that movement to succeed in a measurable time.

13. We are anxious for peace and stability in Nepal and we are at the same time anxious for a liberal regime there. We would like some peaceful transformation to take place without upsetting everything. If that is not possible, trouble will continue in greater or lesser degree. It is hardly possible for us to go back completely to conditions which prevailed previously. The Prime Minister and his group cannot be friendly to India, nor can we be very friendly to them. If they are wise enough to accept our advice, some way out might be found.

14. It is possible that the Nepal Government hopes to get support from the U.K. Government. This support of course cannot be military. As I have said above, the U.K. Ambassador in Kathmandu is very reactionary and a strong supporter of the Ranas. No doubt he is advising his Government accordingly. Even so, we do not propose to change our policy, because we are convinced that there should be no going back in Nepal. Popular opinion in India would not tolerate it and that would not be an ending of the trouble.

15. I might inform you that the last Prime Minister of Nepal, Sir Padma Shamsher Jung, who retired about a year ago and who is living in Ranchi, has given his support to the old King.<sup>5</sup> So have some other members of the Rana family.

16. I have given you a background of the position. It is essentially fluid and we shall have to keep in touch with each other in regard to any new development.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

5. Padma Shamsher sent a telegram to King Tribhuvan in Delhi wishing him courage and determination to democratize Nepal.

## 11. Policy towards Nepal<sup>1</sup>

I have read your note about your interview with the U.K. High Commissioner today about Nepal.<sup>2</sup> I expected something of this kind in view of the activities of the British Ambassador in Nepal.<sup>3</sup> I think we should give an answer to the U.K. High Commissioner as soon as possible. There is no need to wait at all for it. Nothing is going to happen in the next two or three days which is likely to clarify the situation much further than it is today.

2. Apart from the merits of the question, I think we might well inform the U.K. High Commissioner that we do not consider Sir George Falconer as a very reliable guide in regard to our policy in Nepal. Nor do we consider any person, who has been an employee of the Nepal Government for twenty-five years, as suitable to advise us.<sup>4</sup> Our own experience of Sir George Falconer, when he was connected with the Government of India and later during the past two or three years, has not inspired any confidence in us in his judgment or the general policy he pursues in Nepal. From such information as we possess, he has been consistently following a policy opposed to all reform movements in Nepal. Even in the recent crisis, the Rana regime has been frequently going to him for advice and, presumably, much that they have done recently has been in consonance with that advice. We are convinced that this policy of bolstering up the Rana regime, as it is today, is doomed to failure, even though they might, for the moment, appear to succeed.

3. We need hardly point out that in the event of the U.K. Government recognising the new boy King and our not recognising him, grave complications will result. As it is, the position is peculiar. We still recognise the old King, and, at the same time, recognise the present Government in Nepal. This is not satisfactory, but it is inevitable, and not without precedent, in view of the

1. Note to the Secretary-General, M.E.A., 16 November 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Archibald Nye told G.S. Bajpai that the British Cabinet would be considering the Nepal Government's request for recognising the new King on 20 November and they would like to know the thinking of the Government of India in this regard. Britain felt that Tribhuvan could not return as King without the resignation of the Prime Minister and, probably, the downfall of the Rana regime. Nye added that the Rana regime might be backward and reactionary, but its overthrow could lead to chaos and the need for stable conditions, therefore, might make it expedient to recognise the new King.
3. George Falconer, in his telegram of 13 November to the British Foreign Office, had advised recognition of the boy King without delay.
4. Bajpai had noted that Nye's information, gathered from the British Ambassador in Kathmandu and another Englishman who had been an employee of the Nepal Government for twenty-five years, was that the army was loyal to the Rana regime and that, among the people of Nepal, not only in the Kathmandu Valley but in the remoter parts of the realm, there was little discontent.



rapid changes that have taken place. It is not our intention to recognise the new King and we propose to continue our recognition of the old King. This is not a final decision or commitment in the matter, but, as at present advised, we see no reason to alter it. It is possible that even after full consideration later we might continue to recognise the old King and certain consequences will naturally flow from this.

4. It is clear that the Rana regime in Nepal is not only backward and reactionary in the extreme, but is also inefficient and incapable of any kind of progress. Its very foundation rests on a system which cannot progress and which can only continue by ever-increasing repression. So long as the continuation of this regime was not challenged, it could go on functioning in the old traditional way. Once that challenge has come, it cannot continue in that old way for long, even though it succeeds in suppressing the present movement against it. The whole structure has been shaken up and the cracks will not heal; they are bound to widen till further changes come. The result, therefore, is likely to be a continuing instability. That is to say, the very thing that is feared in case a change is brought about, will continue. It is our considered view that no real stability can exist in Nepal without some radical change in its Government. What that change should be is a matter for serious consideration. It need not involve the elimination of the Ranas, though it is likely to limit the power of the Ranas considerably. It might be mentioned that the last Prime Minister of Nepal, Sir Padma Shamsheer Jung Rana, who retired from his office about a year or more ago and is at present living in India, is also supporting the old King and is opposed to the present policy of the Nepal Government. It might be said that the great majority of the Nepalese living in India, and their number is very considerable, sympathise entirely with the old King. The Gurkha League, which essentially consists mostly of ex-soldiers, has also declared in favour of the old King. Popular feeling in India is entirely in favour of radical reform in Nepal and would greatly resent our Government taking any step which would result in consolidating afresh the old Rana regime. These Ranas themselves are split up into two or more groups.<sup>5</sup>

5. The whole procedure adopted in removing the King and crowning a baby in his place within a day or two was highly irregular from any point of view and has been challenged even according to the laws of Nepal. Whatever the law may be, however, there was an element of indecency about it. To give one's approval to that procedure is to accept something as

5. In 1928, Chandra Shamsheer, the then Prime Minister of Nepal, divided the Ranas into A, B, and C classes according to the caste of their mothers. By January 1950, most of the B and C class Ranas allied themselves closely with King Tribhuvan, and favoured democratic reforms. The C class Ranas, in particular, identified themselves closely with the ideology and leadership of the Nepali Congress.



right which was essentially wrong and to anger public opinion in India and, I think, in Nepal. Public opinion in Nepal, after its long period of complete suppression, may not be articulate, but there is no doubt that the Rana regime is unpopular. The Army as a whole may still continue to support the Rana regime, though even about that there are doubts, and certainly some elements do not support it.

6. During the last three years, more especially during the last year, we have made repeated attempts to induce the Prime Minister to agree to giving substantial reforms. We sent for him here in Delhi and again tried to make this perfectly clear to him. We pointed out that the only result of his refusal would be to exasperate and frustrate large numbers of people who might then indulge in adventurist schemes. Further, that having found that there was no peaceful and constitutional method of achieving reform, they would inevitably turn towards China for help. They might not get much help from China, but this change in the public attitude would itself be unfortunate and dangerous. The Prime Minister, however, appeared to be completely impervious to reason or argument and he continued his policy of repression. This led even to the arrest and imprisonment and torture of high-ranking officials and some members of his own family.

7. We can consider this matter from the narrower point of view of the existing situation not only in Nepal but across its borders, and we can also consider it from the more long-term point of view. From either view it seems to us that it is quite essential to make the present Prime Minister realise that radical changes have to come. The old order cannot and should not continue. Any attempt to bolster up that old order will merely result in an unstable Government, continuous intrigues, and frequent trouble, ending ultimately in collapse.

8. It is difficult to prophesy what the result of the present movement in Nepal might be. It is unlikely that it will be crushed completely soon. It is likely that the Nepalese Government will succeed in recapturing some of the towns that were seized by the insurgents. This will drive the insurgents into the countryside where there are very few good communications. Even if the Army is generally loyal to the Government, it will be very difficult for them to cover large parts of the country. The result will be that major towns and strategic points will be occupied by the Nepal Army and large areas will be held by the insurgents, who may be occasionally driven out from one area into another. This will result in continued instability.

9. The Government of India have, in spite of their sympathy in the cause of reform, tried to keep neutral in this conflict. During the first two or three days there was an element of confusion on the Bihar border and some of the insurgents crossed it. Later, strict orders were issued to prevent any crossing of our border by armed men from either side. We have also stopped any

aircraft from going to Nepal, except the air service when it starts afresh. If the Government of India had not adopted this strictly neutral attitude, the insurgents would have been helped greatly by large numbers of Nepali and other volunteers from India.

10. We have suggested to the Nepal Government that there should be a ceasefire and all fighting should stop, so that the whole question can be considered peacefully. It seems to us that that is the only way to consider it and bring about some kind of a stable solution. That solution would probably mean the reinstatement of the old King, but without the elimination of the Ranas. It would mean the introduction of a popular element in the Government. However, this question can be considered more fully later.

11. If any recognition is given to the boy King that would immediately prevent any peaceful settlement, by encouraging the Ranas to continue with their old ways. Conflict would continue and, as at present advised, we would not be able to recognise the boy King or give support in any way to the Rana Government.

12. I think that you might speak to the U.K. High Commissioner on the lines indicated above. He should realise that any precipitate action by the U.K. Government, which is not in consonance with our policy towards Nepal, might well lead to serious consequences.

## 12. Cable to C.P.N. Singh<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram 179.<sup>2</sup> Government of India's border policy and taking possession of thirty-five lakhs strictly in accordance with our declared policy which applies to both sides. This, however, has nothing to do with our general views and sympathies.

Our information is that the Nepali Congress is likely to resort to guerilla tactics which will embarrass Kathmandu Government much more than open conflict.

1. New Delhi, 17 November 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. Singh reported on 16 November that India's confiscating rupees thirty-five lakhs brought to Delhi by the Nepali Congress leaders from the Birganj treasury, refusal of flight facilities from India to the Nepali Congress aircraft, and disallowing of any armed activity or carrying of arms on either side of the Indo-Nepal border had deflated the supporters of the Nepali Congress who had fanned out in villages around Biratnagar.



Any capital punishments for political prisoners will be resented by us at this stage and will worsen situation. If *Gurujis* at instance of Maharaja make any statement about King, we shall consider this as further unfriendly act.<sup>3</sup>

We have received no reply yet from you to paragraph three of our telegram 24399.<sup>4</sup> Enquiries from U.K. Government suggest that Falconer has been urging them to hasten recognition of boy King on pleas that this is internal affair of Nepal and Rana regime alone can ensure stability. In our reply to U.K. we are taking strong line and making it clear that we shall follow our own policy. Even if Nepal Government succeed in suppressing insurrection, trouble will continue and take form of guerilla warfare which will be difficult to suppress. This will not bring stability but prolong uncertainty and turmoil.

We are convinced that, after what has happened, there can be no going back, and immediate consideration of prompt measures to liberalise system of government in Nepal is essential. Even if some foreign Governments like U.K. give recognition, that will not affect our attitude and will only lead to complications. We have no intention of coming to final decision until situation is clearer and we are satisfied that practical measures are being adopted for political reforms. For this purpose, we have already offered our good offices.

Nepalese Ambassador<sup>5</sup> who saw us yesterday suggested that, after recapture of Birganj, Government of Nepal would probably be ready to act upon our advice. We would like to impress upon you that present state of uncertainty cannot continue indefinitely and that we should like an early indication of the response of the Maharaja to our suggestion for a positive approach to Nepalese political problem. Prompt though belated show of statesmanship might still secure for Rana family a position of influence in governance of Nepal; delay can only weaken chances of this.

We should like you to speak on lines indicated to Maharaja as soon as possible. You can put the argument to him as persuasively as you like but the Nepal Government should be left in no doubt either of the urgency of finding a solution or of the firmness of our own attitude. Also that we do not propose to be influenced by what other Governments might or might not do and shall decide for ourselves.

3. Singh also reported that while Ganesh Man Singh and six other political prisoners were to be given capital punishment, Sunderraj Challise was to get life imprisonment. He added that the *Gurujis*, the royal priests, held in the same esteem as the Pope, were likely to declare the King as an outcaste for having eaten food served by untouchables during his stay in the Indian Embassy.

4. Of 14 November 1950. Not available.

5. Singha Shamsher Jung Bahadur Rana.



### 13. Which King to Recognize?<sup>1</sup>

I feel that the time has come when we should take some more positive step in regard to the situation in Nepal. Delay simply means allowing the situation to drift, and it may have harmful consequences. We know that the U.K. Government are considering this subject, and more especially the question of recognising the boy King.<sup>2</sup> We have asked them not to rush their decision and it is possible that they may postpone it. Nevertheless, it is desirable that we should give a lead in this matter, so that other countries might not do something which might embarrass us later. Also it is only fair that our people as well as the Government and people of Nepal should know how we feel and what we intend doing. We cannot go into details about the future at this stage, but something can be done which somewhat clarifies the situation.

2. If we are clear in our own minds about any aspect of the Nepal situation, then we should so work from now onwards as to enable our policy to succeed. Waiting for events to happen and then to adapt our policy to them is not helpful. Indeed that means that we have no particular policy.

3. The first question that arises is the question of recognition. Do we recognise the boy King or do we state definitely that we propose to continue our recognition of the old King? There may be a third course also.

4. I am quite convinced that under no circumstances should we recognise the child King. There is no warrant in law, tradition or in custom for this; what is more important is that such recognition would mean a complete victory of the Rana regime and a consolidation of their autocracy in the worst possible circumstances. It would mean throwing overboard completely the progressive forces of Nepal and those who sympathise with them in India. It would mean a betrayal of the old King, who has been badly treated by the Ranas and who has sought refuge and advice from us. It would not even mean our gaining the goodwill of the Rana regime; they will treat this as a sign of fear and weakness on our part and will exploit this for their own advantage. Thus it will mean that we will have no friends left at all and both the Rana group and the public will be hostile to us. Indeed we cannot possibly recognise this new baby King without gravely offending Indian public opinion. Personally, I think any such act would be bad morals and bad politics.

1. Note to the Secretary-General, M.E.A., 18 November 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. An official of the British Foreign Office informed the Nepalese Ambassador in London on 14 November that the question of recognition would be discussed by the Cabinet on 20 November and a decision would be taken in favour of the boy King.

5. If we are quite clear in our minds that we cannot recognise this boy King, then the sooner we say so, the better. Delay creates complications and encourages those who have put forward this baby.

6. As a consequence of this, we have to repeat and confirm our recognition of the old King. A suggestion has been made that perhaps it might be desirable to get the King to abdicate in favour of his eldest son. I do not myself see any virtue in this proposal. As a man, the King will be a better Head of the State than his young Yuvaraj. Pushing him out in favour of his eldest son will please nobody. So I am in favour of our indicating that, after full consideration, we have decided to continue our recognition of the old King. I might add that this does not prevent us, at a later stage, from coming to some arrangement under which the Yuvaraj might come into the picture. I do not think that will be necessary or desirable; however that possibility is not ruled out.

7. What I have said above is, in my opinion, independent of happenings in Nepal. That is to say, whatever might happen there in regard to the present troubles and conflicts, we should adhere to this policy of recognising the old King. In a fluid and changing situation, that fact should stand out. This itself will help in clarifying people's views and in limiting the area of discussion. It will no doubt influence the U.K. and the U.S.A. also.

8. The second point that we should make clear is that this conflict in Nepal must not continue. There should be a ceasefire and an attempt to find a solution by discussion and peaceful methods. We are prepared to help in that. Indeed we have already suggested this to the Nepal Government but have had no response. We might as well declare this to the public also.

9. Thirdly, we should say that the only proper solution would be one which liberalises the present regime and brings in the popular element in the Government. We need not say more about this at this stage.

10. All these three points seem to me not only to be important but to stand by themselves, even apart from the events taking place in Nepal. We should therefore state our policy clearly in regard to them. I think that this itself would tend towards producing a little more stability in the position than there is at present.

11. Our Government has a particular responsibility in regard to Nepal and we cannot permit foreign countries to take the initiative or the lead from us. Therefore, we have to take the initiative now and follow it up later. Throughout the past year it has been clear that the Rana Government, in spite of its professions, is completely hostile to any idea of reform and, as a consequence, is hostile to us. Recent events have no doubt added to that feeling of hostility. There is no chance of our overcoming that or becoming friendly with them in future, if they survive as a Government as they are today. An unfriendly Nepal is a danger to us. Therefore, both for reasons of larger policy and practical politics, we cannot support them or rely upon them or tolerate their



continuance as they are. Even from the point of view of having a measure of peace and order in Nepal, it is clear that this will not be established under the Rana regime any more, even though they succeed in crushing the main body of the insurgents.

12. In seeking a solution, we need not think of eliminating the Rana regime completely. There may be a middle course with the King, some members of the Ranas associated in the Government, and some popular elements. This could form an interim government till further decisions are taken, in some way or other, by elected representatives of Nepal.

13. We need not, however, say anything about this at present and much would depend on other developments. But even if the Ranas remain, the present Prime Minister and his brother, the Commander-in-Chief,<sup>3</sup> are so committed to the past, so obdurate and reactionary, so hostile to the King and to India, and so unpopular generally, that they can hardly remain in their present offices.

14. It is worthy of note that the last Prime Minister of Nepal, Sir Padma Shamsher Jung Bahadur Rana, who resigned from his office last year, has expressed his allegiance to the old King and is coming to Delhi soon to pay him his homage.

15. To sum up, I think that at the present moment we should decide to confirm our recognition of the old King, to ask for a ceasefire and peaceful discussion and to state that a reformed and liberalised regime should take the place of the present one in Nepal. Having decided this, we should inform the U.K. and the U.S.A. Governments about it immediately and convey our decision also to the Prime Minister of Nepal through our Ambassador. A day or two later, we can give publicity to it.

3. Kaiser Shamsher Jung Bahadur Rana.

## 14. Cable to C.P.N. Singh<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram 182.<sup>2</sup> Have already indicated to you our present policy and

1. New Delhi, 18 November 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. Singh reported on 16 November that Bijaya Shamsher had admitted that stationing of the Indian armed police along the Indo-Nepal border and change in the tone of All India Radio had helped retrieve the situation a little in favour of the Government of Nepal but Mohan Shamsher was still feeling aggrieved as he believed that the insurrection had taken place with the connivance of the Government of India. Bijaya Shamsher also stated that if the Government of India were not prepared to help the Nepal Government with troops and planes, they could at least recognise the deposition of King Tribhuvan and arrest Subarna Shamsher and Mahabir Shamsher, two prominent Nepali Congress leaders, to satisfy the Nepal Government.



what you should say to Maharaja.<sup>3</sup> Maharaja may feel aggrieved, but I take strong exception to manner and content of communications to you on his behalf. We have connived sufficiently for over a year to all kinds of things happening in Nepal, to which we objected and which we considered harmful to Nepal and India. We are not prepared to take our instructions from him as to what we should do and we shall act exactly as we think proper. He ought to know that all our lives have been spent in fighting autocracy and feudalism and we must inevitably sympathise with liberal and progressive movements. He ought to know also that there is strong feeling all over India in this matter and we, as a Government, cannot ignore it. We have offered our advice in the hope of finding peaceful settlement. If that advice is ignored, we shall have to reconsider our position. On no account can we agree to undiluted autocracy and feudal conditions continuing in Nepal.<sup>4</sup>

3. On 14 November, Singh was instructed to suggest to Maharaja Mohan Shamsher immediate cessation of hostilities and a peaceable approach to the problem. In this the Government of India were prepared to help as in their opinion peace and stability could only come to Nepal by a liberal policy of political reforms. See also *ante*, pp. 372-373.
4. Singh telegraphed on 18 November that he had conveyed "the gist of our talk" to Maharaja Mohan Shamsher. The Maharaja criticised the Indian Government for not preventing an attack on the Nepal Government and for allowing "free movement even for the looters of their treasury." He thought that India wished to grab Nepal by raising trouble. The reforms introduced by him were all that the Nepalese people deserved and it was impossible to assist the King to come back. On being asked whether he would accept counsel from the Indian Government, he replied that there was no common ground either on recognition of the King or on changing the Constitution. He said that he must save his dynasty and "hinted that he might take things to The Hague or to U.N.O."

## 15. To V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

November 18, 1950

My dear Krishna,

I have just received your telegram No. 6704 about Nepal.<sup>2</sup> Two days ago, Nye came to see Bajpai to convey a message from Bevin. We were informed

1. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Krishna Menon telegraphed on 17 November that during his meeting with Bevin "latter let slip his remark that the boy King may be recognised". Bevin also said that "the U.K. and India were concerned with Nepal and knew the country and had connections and it would be no good to drag the Americans into it." Krishna Menon thought "the U.K. wants to fill the role of friends of Nepal but the Gurkhas' attitude is worrying them. There is also a rumour that the Ranas might make considerable concession to U.K. and U.S. in minerals, etc."

that the British Cabinet was going to consider the question on the 20th of this month and they were inclined to recognise the boy King. This was on the basis of the information received by them from their Ambassador, Falconer, in Nepal who had told them that the Rana regime had the Army with them and were bound to succeed. The only way to have some stability in Nepal, which was so necessary now, was to support the Rana regime. The U.K. had practically accepted this viewpoint, but we were told that they did not wish to take the initiative in the matter or to do anything without fully consulting us, as the responsibility chiefly lay on India.

Bajpai reported the conversation to me. Thereupon I wrote a fairly long note<sup>3</sup> on the subject for Bajpai and I asked him to convey my reply to Nye. Both Nye's message and my reply were orally delivered.

My reply was strongly worded and pointed out that any action taken by the U.K. Government, as indicated, would have serious consequences because, as at present advised, we propose to continue to recognise the old King. We pointed out further that our information about Nepal was different from what Falconer had said. We added that our experience of Falconer was that he was very reactionary and he had come in the way of our efforts at inducing the Ranas to bring in any reforms.

We said that while we had not come to any final decisions, it was clear that there could be no going back to the old regime, which was thoroughly bad in every way. It could not even be expected that there would be stability in future under the Rana regime. Even if the insurgents were crushed in a military sense, trouble would continue and there would be guerilla warfare for a long time. There could be no doubt that the Rana regime was unpopular, though the people might be afraid to say or do anything. Any attempt to bolster up that regime could only lead to trouble and prolonged instability.

Possibly, in the course of a day or two, we might declare that after full consideration we have decided to continue our recognition of the old King. Further that we are anxious that this fighting in Nepal should stop and the matter be considered peacefully. We are prepared to help in this process. Indeed we made this suggestion to the Kathmandu Government three days ago. There has been no answer. Lastly, that we are convinced that the Government and the administration in Nepal should be liberalised with popular elements in it. If we issue some such statement, I think it will have a healthy effect. It would also come in the way of the U.K. Government acting otherwise.

You have referred in your telegram<sup>4</sup> and in some letters about information being given by our Ministry to the U.K. Government's representatives. We do

3. See *ante*, pp. 369-372.

4.. Krishna Menon suggested steps "to ensure that none of this or the fact of my communication got back to the Foreign Office irrespective of what may be thought of the importance of the contents of this report."





WITH THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO FRANCE, PARIS, 17 JANUARY 1951





AT CAIRO AIRPORT JAN. 1, 1951

not pass any messages received by us to the U.K. or anyone else. What happens is that when we send you a message to be conveyed to the U.K. Government, normally we send a copy to the U.K. High Commission here. We follow this practice in regard to the U.S.A., China and other countries. As the message is sent to the other Government, we think that it is desirable to send it to their representative here. Perhaps it may sometimes happen that when you see Attlee or Bevin, he has already received a copy of the same message through the U.K. High Commissioner. We have suggested that this practice should be followed at the other end also. Apparently this is not always done. You can rest assured that the messages you send or indeed any other messages, which are secret, do not pass on to anyone else.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

## 16. To C.R. Attlee<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
19 November 1950

Dear Attlee,

We have been considering situation in Nepal which came to a crisis by King's flight, the crowning of his three-year old grandson as new King and insurrection in parts of Nepal. We have been anxious not to interfere and have taken steps to that end. But we are equally anxious to prevent situation from drifting and gradually becoming worse. On 14 November, we instructed our Ambassador in Kathmandu to see the Maharaja and suggest to him immediate cessation of hostilities and peaceable approach to the problem. We offered to help in this and pointed out that in our opinion peace and stability could only come to Nepal by liberal policy of political reforms that would satisfy legitimate aspirations of Nepalese people. There was no response to this. Subsequently we sent a reminder and to this also there was no reply. What we had suggested to the Maharaja was a repetition of friendly advice offered on numerous previous occasions. But owing to circumstances that had arisen it had become urgent and essential for a positive approach to be made by the Nepalese Government.

2. As earnest of our policy not to get mixed up in internal affairs of Nepal and of our disapproval of violent methods to achieve political progress, we have adopted, since news of present insurrection reached us, policy of

1. Copy in V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.



effective neutrality. Governments of States of Indian Union have carried this out strictly by preventing movements of arms and armed forces across our border in either direction. This policy has, I might point out, helped to limit the magnitude and strength of the insurrection. Nevertheless it is clear to us that even if the Nepalese Government gains military successes and recaptures some parts of Nepalese territory which insurgents have occupied, this will not mean end of the fight which will assume a guerilla character. Nor indeed will it end political discontent which feeds and grows on repression. Public opinion in India is completely opposed to the Rana regime in Nepal and sympathises with movement for reform. The King is known to favour reform and is therefore popular. Liberalisation of the present regime has therefore become a matter of great urgency as a result of recent events and in the interests of Nepal's stability which is of vital importance to us. The alternative is continued internal unrest and tumult due to political frustration. There is widespread sympathy in India with the movement challenging the Rana regime. Those elements in Nepal who have looked to friendly Indian support for political reform will orient themselves towards China for aid and even in India there would be deep dissatisfaction with the policy of our Government. All this will continuously threaten the security of Nepal which must in turn react adversely upon the security of India.

3. Whilst we are most anxious to respect the independence of Nepal we cannot ignore the effect on our own vital interests of events in Nepal due to geographical situation of the two countries. We have therefore to take a decision quickly and with due regard to our own interests. We are satisfied that recognition of new child King would be not only wrong from the point of view of law, custom and tradition but also politically wrong and likely to lead to grave dissatisfaction and continued unrest. It will entail regency of fifteen years during which present regime will seek to maintain itself by coercion and intense repression.

4. We cannot therefore recognise the new child King. But we also realise that reforms to be stable should not involve too violent a break with the past. We therefore think that Nepal should remain a Kingdom and that in the interests of continuity the old King should continue to be recognised. His popular and liberal ideas will help to make any change peaceful and effective. We do not envisage the elimination of the Rana family but a limitation of its power and the association with the King's Government of popular representatives whose influence and experience would be helpful in securing to this transitional government the support of the great majority of the people until such time as provision is made for some form of representative government. We appreciate that establishment of fully democratic institutions will take time and we can only make a beginning at the present time. But that beginning can no longer be delayed.



5. In view of the U.K.'s past association with Nepal and her present relations with that country we have thought it desirable to communicate our conclusion to you. We are anxious that in this matter India and the U.K. should strive for a common policy and approach and sincerely hope that it will be possible to achieve unity of understanding and action. India has no designs on Nepal's independence and seeks no special advantage for herself. But neither India nor Nepal can escape the facts of geography or resist the forces of modern political trends. All that India seeks is to ensure Nepal's security and her own by timely and wise adjustment of old institutions and usages to new needs. We feel sure that in this we can look confidently to the U.K. for cooperation.

6. In view of the obvious dangers of continued uncertainty we are anxious to announce our decision as soon as possible and would greatly value an early indication of the policy of His Majesty's Government.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 17. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

Our decision about Nepal communicated in yesterday's message for Attlee<sup>2</sup> is final. But we are awaiting his reply before taking any further steps. We are anxious to expedite matters as delay is harmful.

2. Meanwhile following background information may help you in any talks. Though Birganj as expected has fallen to Nepal Government troops<sup>3</sup> today's reports received indicate that trouble is spreading. Government not very sure about loyalty of troops. Indian Government decision when publicly known will have powerful effect on situation. In India demonstrations in favour of Nepali Congress and partly against Government of India's passive and unhelpful attitude taking place. In Kathmandu large numbers of prominent persons including high-ranking officers in prison reported tortured. One person

1. New Delhi, 20 November 1950. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

2. See the preceding item.

3. Birganj was evacuated by the insurgents on 20 November after failure to replenish ammunition supplies and it was reoccupied by the troops of the Nepal Government the same day.

died of torture recently. Possibility of large-scale executions if Ranas succeeded. Nepalese soldiers who recently refused to fight awarded heavy sentences.

3. Rana regime has been quite unique in world in personal autocracy and feudal character. King and family practically kept as prisoners under constant watch with no authority even to engage domestic servants. Revenue of the State considered private property of Maharaja and huge fortunes piled up by his family who occupy all important posts. No trace of civil liberty. Jail conditions medieval and torture normal. There is no doubt people generally thoroughly discontented but owing to long suppression rather afraid.

4. It is quite impossible for Nepal to continue under Rana regime as before. We cannot agree to it and Indian people would never permit us to do so. Hence our decision about recognition of old King is inevitable and final. From this flow other consequences which we can consider in light of developing events, our desire being rapid restoration of peace and stability.

## 18. To Govind Ballabh Pant<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

November 20, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

I am writing to you about the Nepal position. We have finally decided to continue to recognise the old King, who is at present our guest in Delhi. We have accordingly informed the U.K. Government of this. In a day or two, we shall formally communicate this to the Prime Minister of Nepal and after that give publicity to it.

We have further decided that it is not possible to revert to the old Rana regime in Nepal. Indeed this cannot happen anyhow. Things have gone too far and popular opinion in India as well as in Nepal is against it.

We do not suggest that the entire structure of the Nepal Government should be changed. Our present ideas are that some kind of an interim arrangement will have to be made, pending any decision taken with the consent of the people of Nepal. In this interim government there should be the King and a government consisting of some members of the Rana family and some popular representatives. Of course, this is subject to developments.

I am at present merely taking you into my confidence so that you may keep in touch with developments. The decision that we have already taken in regard to the King is an important one and from that all kinds of consequences

1. J.N. Collection. Copies of this letter were sent to Sri Krishna Sinha and B.C. Roy.



flow. It will necessarily mean following it up in some way or other later, if the present Prime Minister refuses to accept our decision.

So far as the Birganj money is concerned, which is in deposit with us at present, we shall keep it and not hand it over till conditions are more stable.

In view of the decision that we have taken, our general policy will have to be modelled accordingly. While our previous instructions hold about arms, etc., we should look with sympathy on the reform movement and those who are in favour of it and not discourage them in any way.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 19. To Jayaprakash Narayan<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
November 20, 1950

My dear Jayaprakash,

Your letter of the 17th<sup>2</sup> has just reached me. I am not annoyed by its tone, but I am distressed at the lack of understanding that you have shown and I am more than distressed by the astonishing stupidity of some of the things that the leaders of the Nepali Congress have been responsible for. I can understand their making mistakes in a difficult situation, but to make mistakes which might well ruin their cause and which no person with a grain of intelligence should have done, is almost inexcusable. If they are dealing with an insurrection, they should behave as persons generally do who are engaged in this task.

I quite agree with you that the opportunity of securing freedom for Nepal has come and that the trump cards are there. When I see this opportunity being almost lost and every kind of bungling being done by amateur politicians, who know nothing about politics and less about insurrection, I have a right to

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Jayaprakash wrote that he had heard an "incredible and literally heart-rending" account from the Koirala brothers of their talks in Delhi. "Koirala is doing for his country what you did for yours, and you speak of putting him in bars and fetters... because of some imaginary embarrassment that the Nepali revolution has caused you.... You are estranging your friends and stepping into the parlour of your enemies." He pleaded not to let the "Nepali freedom be assassinated by your hesitations and the bungs of your advisers. You have all the trump cards—the King and the revolution—on your side. Remember history depends upon your policy in this regard."



be upset. It is not enough for a person to have good motives when he is in a responsible position. Young Koirala may be an excellent person, but his conception of what should be done and how is primitive in the extreme. The kind of demands he made on me staggered me.

Nothing can stop a revolution in Nepal, except the folly of those who are supporting it. The revolution is, I believe, an indigenous one and a large number of the people of Nepal sympathise with it. Most people in India also sympathise with it. Widespread propaganda is being carried on by our opponents abroad to show that this is just an example of Indian imperialism and that we have engineered all this. This obviously can do a great deal of harm to the whole movement. We cannot ignore external forces at work against us. What Koirala suggested would have put an end to the idea of an indigenous movement and made it just an adventure of the Indian Government.

That is just what I am afraid of. Adventurist tactics in politics or warfare seldom succeed. Daring does succeed and risk may be taken, but adventurism is infantile.<sup>3</sup>

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal

3. In his reply of 8 December, Jayaprakash wrote that "during the 1942 struggle, hundreds of Indian revolutionaries crossed over into Nepal and took shelter there and even built bases for their revolutionary activities. Even the reactionary Ranas did not throw a fit as we seem to be doing because their territory was being used for the purposes of Indian revolution.... India should never forget the help the people of Nepal rendered during her last struggle for freedom." He felt that a more tolerant attitude should have been adopted towards the Nepali Congress leaders.

## 20. To Mohan Shamsheer Jung Bahadur Rana<sup>1</sup>

In a telegram dated the 14th November, the Indian Ambassador was instructed to convey to Your Highness our suggestion, made in all friendship and sincerity, that all fighting should cease immediately and that, in order to ensure lasting tranquillity and stability in Nepal, Your Highness's Government should make a positive and liberal approach to the legitimate desire of the Nepalese people for political advancement. We also expressed our readiness to render all possible help to the Government of Nepal in such an attempt. These instructions were repeated to the Ambassador on the 17th November.<sup>2</sup>

1. New Delhi, 21 November 1950. J.N. Collection. C.P.N. Singh was asked to convey this message to the Maharaja the next day, but subsequently advised to hold it up for some days.  
2. See *ante*, pp. 372-373.

The Government of India have been informed by Mr Chandreswar Prasad Singh that their views have been communicated to the Nepal Government first through General Bijaya Shamsheer and, subsequently, to Your Highness. No definite reply to the Government of India's specific suggestion has yet been received.

From reports that have been reaching the Government of India from the Governments of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, it appears that insurrectionary troubles in Nepal continue. Had the Government of India, in strict conformity to their policy of non-intervention in the affairs of Nepal, not taken effective steps to stop the movement of armed personnel and arms across their frontier, the magnitude and strength of the insurrection would undoubtedly have been greater. The Government of India have no desire to interfere in Nepal's domestic affairs. At the same time, they cannot ignore the lesson of experience that political movements aiming at the effective association of the people in the government of a country cannot be dealt with satisfactorily by force. Military success against popular forces can only be short-lived, and the frustration engendered by such temporary setbacks merely deepens popular discontent and tends to make a peaceful solution more and more difficult, indeed impossible. The Government of India feel it their friendly duty towards Nepal to affirm once more the importance of positive action by the Government of Nepal to meet the urgent demand of the people of Nepal for a liberal and progressive Constitution.

Meanwhile, a decision as to who should be recognised as King of Nepal cannot be deferred. Not only is the present situation anomalous but the uncertainty caused by it is bound to retard the restoration in Nepal of normal conditions. After full consideration of all the circumstances, the Government of India have decided not to recognise Prince Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Deva as King and to continue to recognise His Majesty Maharajadhiraja Tribhuvana Bir Bikram Jung Bahadur Shah Bahadur Shumsher Jung as King of Nepal.<sup>3</sup>

3. C.P.N. Singh was also asked to inform the Maharaja that an announcement about the decision had to be made in the Indian Parliament as soon as possible. Nehru added, "Should His Highness be prepared to respond to our suggestion for discussion of question of prompt and positive approach to problem of reform in Nepal, we shall be happy to receive His Highness or his representative in Delhi for such discussion and postpone announcement for two or three days."



## 21. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

On 19th evening we sent you message for Attlee about Nepal.<sup>2</sup> We were expecting early reply but none so far has come. We instructed our Ambassador to deliver to Prime Minister tomorrow Government of India message conveying *inter alia* our decision to continue recognition of old King.<sup>3</sup> Nye was informed. He pressed us to wait for U.K. Government's reply. We have therefore asked our Ambassador to postpone delivery of our message till further instructions.

2. We feel strongly however that delay is harmful. News reached us from Birganj that Nepal Government forces are indulging in large-scale arrests, torture and shooting.<sup>4</sup> All press correspondents have been kept out of Birganj.

3. We have made it clear to Nye that our decision regarding Nepal is final.

1. New Delhi, 21 November 1950. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

2. See *ante*, pp. 379-381.

3. See *ante*, pp. 384-385.

4. On 18 November, the State troops fired on an unarmed mob of about two thousand persons shouting slogans in the small township of Gaur.

## 22. To C.R. Attlee<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

22 November 1950

Dear Attlee,

Thank you for the message<sup>2</sup> that Sir Archibald Nye delivered to me today and for the exposition of HMG's point of view regarding the Nepal situation that he made to me. We had a long and frank talk and he must have telegraphed to you the reasons that led us to the decision not to recognise the young Prince but to continue recognition of the King now in Delhi. I can assure you of our earnest desire to maintain unity of understanding and action with the U.K. in all matters of common interest. After the fullest consideration, however, of the points that your High Commissioner urged, I find that it is not possible for us to change the decision that we have taken and that we communicated

1. Copy in V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

2. Attlee promised to send his reply soon to Nehru's letter of 19 November, and expressed satisfaction over India's deferring communicating to the Nepal Government refusal to recognize the new King till Attlee's reply had been received.



to you in my telegram 22364 of November 19.<sup>3</sup> I can only conclude with the hope that the U.K. and India may adopt a common policy towards Nepal.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. See *ante*, pp. 379-381.

## 23. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

Among other points mentioned by Nye to me today was what would we do with our Gurkha army if Maharaja asked for them back.<sup>2</sup> I replied that we would tell our Gurkhas that they were at perfect liberty to go back if they so wanted but they were welcome to stay on with us. I might inform you that we have been keeping in touch with our Gurkha regiments and our information is that they are very pleased with us for offering shelter to their King. Attlee's fears in this behalf are therefore completely unfounded. Indeed it is the other way about and if we reversed our policy we might have difficulties to face.

1. New Delhi, 22 November 1950. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. There were twenty-four battalions of Gurkhas in India, twelve under the tripartite agreement of 1947 and twelve 'wartime' battalions on loan from the Government of Nepal.

## 24. Record of Interview with the Nepalese Ambassador<sup>1</sup>

I saw the Nepalese Ambassador this evening at 9.30 p.m. and he was with me for about half an hour. I referred to our last meeting<sup>2</sup> and to his suggestion to me then that he might go to Kathmandu and speak frankly to the Maharaja and tell him of the position here. I reminded him that when he had said this, my reply had been that it was a good idea and we would welcome his going there. Then I said that the U.K. High Commissioner had been to see me and

1. Note to the Secretary-General, M.E.A., 24 November 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. On 22 November 1950.

had mentioned this matter to me. I inferred that he (the Nepalese Ambassador) had spoken about it to the U.K. High Commissioner. He denied this and said that he had not mentioned it at all, but that Nye had said to him that it would be worthwhile for him to go to Kathmandu. (It is possible that I might have mentioned this to Nye.)

2. The Nepalese Ambassador went on to say that he had particularly avoided paying any visits to diplomats here ever since the trouble started in Nepal. The U.K. High Commissioner and the American Ambassador<sup>3</sup> were however frequently visiting him and sympathising with him. The Belgian Ambassador<sup>4</sup> also came occasionally.

3. I told the Nepalese Ambassador that in any event we would welcome his going to Kathmandu to explain the position frankly to his Prime Minister and we would give him every facility to do so. It was for him to decide. He could of course speak to his Prime Minister as he liked. But we should like him to explain one point quite clearly and that was that it was not possible for us to recognise the boy Prince as King. That was a final decision. We would like however to discuss other matters and to find a way out of the present difficulties.

4. The Nepalese Ambassador was most reluctant to go to Kathmandu. He said that it would serve no useful purpose and that he was not trusted by his Prime Minister. He had been giving him his own views of the developing situation and advice about the necessity for reforms for a long time past. He knew that there would be trouble and he had warned his Prime Minister. But his advice had not been heeded. So there was no point in his going there, more especially with the kind of message I had suggested.

5. When I again pressed him to go or at any rate to convey to the Maharaja that we had suggested his going to Kathmandu, he did not agree to either suggestion. He said that the best thing was for General Bijaya to come here and he would send for him.

6. I did not mention to him that I have received any message from Mr Attlee.<sup>5</sup> I only spoke of the U.K. High Commissioner's visit to me. Nor

3. Loy Henderson was concurrently accredited to Kathmandu.

4. Prince de Ligne.

5. In his message of 23 November, handed to Nehru by Archibald Nye on 24 November, Attlee stated that the British Cabinet was anxious to avoid a divergence of views between the U.K. and India on the question of recognition and was willing to defer a final decision in the matter for a few days in the hope of arriving at a common policy. He, however, warned Nehru "that we see no choice before us other than to accord recognition to the new King", the latter having been "installed by duly constitutional methods." Sharing Nehru's view that reforms in Nepal were desirable, he stated that "while it would be quite proper for either or both of us to give advice in the normal diplomatic way, any pressure from outside would be regarded as unwarrantable interference by a foreign country."



did I say anything about the U.K. Government's attitude. When he repeatedly refused to go to Kathmandu, I told him that we shall have to tell the U.K. High Commissioner about it as well as that he was sending for General Bijaya. He agreed.

7. He asked me what we were going to do and whether the King might go to Nepal. I said that the King was a free man and could go where he liked. But I did not think there was much chance of his going to any part of Nepal in the near future. When the King came here, we had told him that he was free to do anything he liked. But naturally the position was embarrassing both for him and for us and it was desirable not to make any statement or see any pressmen. He had agreed.

8. I told him that we had felt for sometime past it was not fair to all parties concerned that there should be any doubt about our views about recognition of the King. Because of this, we had decided to send a message to this effect to the Maharaja through our Ambassador. But we had held it up.<sup>6</sup> We felt nevertheless that the fact of our decision should be made clear to the Maharaja. We would hold up our formal message still. If he (the Nepalese Ambassador) went to Kathmandu, he could tell the Maharaja about our views on this subject. We could also ask our Ambassador to inform the Maharaja informally that I had received his letter and that we were unable to give recognition to the boy Prince. No more need be said at this stage. But sometime a little later we shall have to tell him more formally about it.

9. I told the Ambassador that even apart from history and tradition, the facts of geography had brought India and Nepal close together. None of us could escape the consequences of this association. He said that he realised this completely and had been pointing this out repeatedly to the Maharaja. He added that it was a little absurd to call Nepal independent. It had not been independent in the past and it could not be really independent in the future. It had had a kind of nominal independence and he would like it to retain this. I told him that we had absolutely no desire to interfere with the independence of Nepal and indeed we would like it to continue, but inevitably we had to be closely associated with each other.

10. I asked the Ambassador about Falconer. He said that Falconer was a good man and had been giving good advice to the Maharaja. I was a little surprised to hear this from him, because I had an idea that he had criticised Falconer previously. It is possible that I misunderstood him on an earlier occasion or that he expressed himself somewhat differently.

11. I told him that I was going away to Jamshedpur tomorrow and would return on Monday forenoon. On leaving he said that he would send for General Bijaya and that he hoped that he would be here by Monday.

6. See *ante*, pp. 384-385.



12. In the course of his conversation, he repeatedly expressed his helplessness in the matter and the fact that he was not trusted by either party. The Prime Minister thought him a King's man and the King thought him a Rana's man. His position was an unhappy one, but he had tried to do his duty according to his lights. Because of this position of his, he felt reluctant to go to the Maharaja who would immediately accuse him of not having functioned effectively.

## 25. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

Separately I am sending you message for Attlee.<sup>2</sup>

2. When Nye came to see me this evening with Attlee's message I spoke warmly to him on the subject. That message stated that in view of gravity of matter U.K. Government were still keeping it under consideration and were anxious to avoid a divergence of views between us. At the same time he warned me that they saw no choice before them other than to accord recognition to the new King who had been installed by duly constitutional methods.

3. I told Nye that I found the U.K. attitude incomprehensible. Our decision about continuation of recognition of old King was final and irrevocable and it was a matter of deep regret to me that there should be this great difference of views which must necessarily lead to grave consequences. I said that it was unlikely that I would be able to attend the Prime Ministers' Conference next January. It was difficult enough for me to leave India at any time but in view of these developments it may become almost impossible to do so.

4. I am going to Jamshedpur tomorrow morning, returning Monday forenoon.

1. New Delhi, 24 November 1950. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

2. See the next item.

26. To C.R. Attlee<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

24 November 1950

Dear Attlee,

Thank you for your message about Nepal which Sir Archibald Nye brought to me this evening.

I entirely agree with you that no effort should be spared to avoid a divergence of views or actions between us in this matter and it is a matter of deep regret to me that thus far our views are far apart. For us what happens in Nepal is of even more intimate concern than it can be for you and we have given it therefore the most anxious consideration. My colleagues and I have explored all possibilities of finding a common policy with the U.K. towards Nepal in the present situation. We have come to the final conclusion that it is not possible to change the decision on the question of recognition of the King that we have already communicated to you.

When the Nepalese Ambassador suggested to me two days ago that he might himself go to Kathmandu I welcomed the proposal.<sup>2</sup> There was no question of my rejecting it. In fact I encouraged him to go. After I had seen Sir Archibald Nye this evening I sent for the Nepalese Ambassador tonight and repeated to him that we would welcome his going to Kathmandu and would give him all facilities for this purpose. I reminded him that we had previously suggested to the Maharaja that a positive approach should be made at once to the problem of Nepal and that we would be happy to assist in the consideration of this problem in a friendly and constructive manner. I had had no answer to this message. We would like him to explain frankly and fully our position to the Maharaja. The Ambassador was reluctant to go to Kathmandu. I pressed him to do so even though his visit might not bear results. But he expressed his unwillingness to go in the circumstances and said that his visit might be misunderstood by the Maharaja and would produce no satisfactory results. He added that he would ask for General Bijaya, the Maharaja's son, to be sent to Delhi immediately. I told him that I would be glad to discuss the matter with General Bijaya if he came here. I even suggested that the Ambassador might convey to the Maharaja our suggestion that the Ambassador might go to Kathmandu. This also did not appeal to him. He told me that he had been offering his advice to the Maharaja on many occasions

1. Copy in V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

2. In his message of 23 November, Attlee stated that he considered as most valuable "the proposal made to you by the Nepalese Ambassador that he might himself go to Kathmandu in an attempt to bring the two Governments closer together." He added that "it might be very damaging if it were subsequently made known that this offer had been made and rejected" and hoped that Nehru would consider the possibility favourably.



and telling him that trouble would come if this was not accepted. This advice had been ignored. I said to him that it was for him to judge and decide and I could not ask him to do something with which he did not agree. He informed me finally that he would try to get General Bijaya here on Monday next.

I am again instructing our Ambassador in Nepal not to make any formal communication to Maharaja for the present and we shall wait till Monday for General Bijaya to come here.

It is only fair to state however that any effort that we might make to arrive at a settlement would have little chance of success if the Maharaja knows HMG propose to recognise boy Prince as King. I would suggest that as far as possible we should try to avoid an immediate divergence between our policies. I trust that you will appreciate the importance of this.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 27. Cable to C.P.N. Singh<sup>1</sup>

Nye brought Mr Attlee's reply to me this evening. In view of our divergence of opinion, the U.K. Government are still keeping question of recognition under consideration. But Attlee has stated clearly that they see no choice before them other than to accord recognition to the boy Prince as King. He has asked that the Nepalese Ambassador should be encouraged to visit Kathmandu in an attempt to bring the Governments of India and Nepal closer together. Nye also said that the Nepalese Ambassador should go and tell the Maharaja unequivocally what our final decision in regard to recognition was. I told Nye that we had no objection whatever to such a visit. Later tonight I sent for the Nepalese Ambassador and told him that we would welcome his visit to Kathmandu. But he expressed his reluctance to go and said that his visit would serve no useful purpose. He said however that he would send for Bijaya on Monday next, when I shall be back from Jamshedpur. I agreed.

2. I have informed Attlee of all this in my reply<sup>2</sup> and at the same time have made it clear to him that our own decision about recognition cannot be altered. I have further told him that any efforts that we might make with the

1. New Delhi, 24 November 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. See the preceding item.



Maharaja would fail if the Maharaja knew that the U.K. proposed to recognise the boy Prince as King.

3. In view of these developments, you should not communicate our formal message to the Maharaja as proposed in my telegram of 21st November<sup>3</sup> till you hear further from us.

4. I am going to Jamshedpur tomorrow morning and returning Monday forenoon.

3. See *ante*, pp. 384-385.

## 28. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

Kaiser Shamsher,<sup>2</sup> Senior Commanding General, and Bijaya Shamsher, Foreign Minister, who arrived yesterday in Delhi, met me this afternoon for preliminary talk. They urged: (1) Boy Prince having been solemnly crowned as King could not be dethroned, and return of King would result in carnage and neither his safety nor theirs could be guaranteed. (2) Though reforms had been delayed, beginning had been made. Further progress could be made, more non-officials could be added to Cabinet and budget system introduced, pending calling of constituent assembly which must take time.

2. I made it clear that while we wish Nepal to remain independent and strong, facts of geography cannot be ignored. On stability in and security of Nepal depended our own safety and security. While continuity should be maintained, advance must be substantial. If this were not done on basis of general agreement, breach between present Rana dynasty and people must widen and compromise which retained some position for Ranas would become impossible. We did not wish to interfere but were vitally interested in a settlement to which all elements in Nepal primarily concerned would be parties and which would command support of majority of people of Nepal. Such agreement not possible if we exclude King who symbolised both tradition and aspirations of important section of Nepalese people. We considered hasty step taken in crowning a baby very unwise and we were not aware of any law, usage or Constitution which justified it. In any event no settlement, acceptable

1. New Delhi, 28 November 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. Field Marshal Sir Kaiser Shamsher Jang Bahadur Rana; Director-General of Foreign Affairs, Nepal, 1932-37; first Nepalese Ambassador to Britain, 1947-49; Minister of Defence, 1953-54.

to large sections of people of Nepal, seemed possible on the basis of boy King. If there was general settlement it would be easy to devise methods to give effect to it. This would bring peace and stability to Nepal and risks of internal conflicts would be avoided. Otherwise conflict would continue and even momentary suppression would lead to greater bitterness and continuing conflict which ultimately must result in breaking up completely present political structure of Nepal.

3. Kaiser, who is third in line of succession as Prime Minister, was stubborn over return of King and repeated constitutional cliches which have no relation to realities of Rana autocracy in Nepal. Even what was said about constitutional advance was vague. Atmosphere of talks was, however, friendly and final judgement on prospects of settlement must be reserved for present. As Nepalese wanted time to consider matter further, talks concluded and will be continued tomorrow.

## 29. To Rajendra Prasad<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

November 30, 1950

My dear Mr President,

Thank you for your letter of the 29th November about Nepal.<sup>2</sup> I mentioned your letter to the Foreign Affairs Committee. We are naturally paying every attention to the various matters that you have mentioned.

As you say, there is no question of our recognising the King. But we have to say something about it sooner or later, because we have been asked by the Prime Minister of Nepal to recognise the boy Prince. Some answer has to be given. So far as we can see, in no event can we recognise the boy as King. In fact we merely go on recognising the old King. No fresh act of recognition is necessary. But we have to say what our attitude is to the boy Prince. We may delay this for a few days, but we cannot do so indefinitely.

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Rajendra Prasad wrote that India should do no more than exercise such moral influence as it could "on the powers that be for bringing about the desired reforms" in Nepal. Stressing the need to have a friendly "next door neighbour", he advised against breaking with the Nepalese authorities or making propositions which would be "utterly unacceptable to them." If India interfered "in a military sense... we shall be justly charged before the world opinion... as having sinister designs of our own in Nepal and as having instigated the revolt." He noted that recognising King Tribhuvan would be a "supererogatory act" as he had already been recognised and "continues to be so recognised until the boy is recognised" and added that "we can wait and watch for developments if a request is made for recognising the boy."



If our continuing to recognise the old King is an interference in the internal affairs of Nepal, much more is it an interference to recognise the boy. That is an active step changing our present recognition.

In view of what has happened in Nepal and is happening, it seems to us impossible to go back to the old order there completely. At the same time, we want no major break from it and are therefore trying to find some middle way.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### 30. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

...After many talks Nepalese Ministers presented paper to us which practically meant continuation of old *status quo* plus boy King. We told them that we could not possibly consider this. In our opinion old King must continue and later people of Nepal should decide their Constitution through popularly elected constituent assembly. Meanwhile interim government which might consist of popular representatives as well as some members of Rana family, one of whom might be Prime Minister. Joint responsibility of cabinet. Nepalese Ministers returning to Kathmandu tomorrow with our final message. You will have seen my statement in Parliament that we are continuing to recognise old King and consider substantial reforms essential.<sup>2</sup> Present position is peculiar as we recognise both old King and continue to deal with Nepal's Government. No immediate break apprehended. We shall await Nepalese Government's formal reply before any further public announcement.

Dening<sup>3</sup> yesterday, after his return from Kathmandu,<sup>4</sup> told me that he had advised his Government to wait and see....

1. New Delhi, 9 December 1950. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L. Extracts.
2. See *post*, pp. 432-434.
3. Sir Maberly Esler Denning (1897-1977); served in British Consular Service, 1920-38; appointed to Foreign Office, 1938; Chief Political Adviser to Supreme Allied Commander, South-East Asia, 1943-46; special mission to Asia in the rank of Ambassador, 1950-51; Ambassador to Japan, 1952-57.
4. Denning met the Nepalese representatives in Delhi on 3 December and left for Kathmandu on the same day on a fact-finding mission.



### 31. Political Reforms in Nepal<sup>1</sup>

In the course of the debate on foreign affairs in the House, on the 6th December, I made a reference to Nepal.<sup>2</sup> I stated then that we would not only respect her independence but wanted her to develop into a strong and progressive country. I explained how our interest in the internal conditions of Nepal had become greater and more immediate, as our own security was affected by the recent developments there.

2. We were anxious that there should be peace and stability in Nepal. At the same time, we felt that the introduction of substantial political reforms was essential for this purpose. It was on this basis of respect for Nepal's independence, combined with an urgent interest in political reforms there, that we carried on our conversations with the representatives of the Government of Nepal who were recently in Delhi. We explained our position fully to these representatives, Generals Kaiser Shamsheer and Bijaya Shamsheer, and, at their request, we gave them, on the 8th of this month, a memorandum defining our aims and proposals. For the information of the House, I shall read out this memorandum....<sup>3</sup>

The proposals contained in this memorandum aimed at a peaceful settlement in Nepal and, therefore, provided for substantial reforms which, at the same time, would preserve continuity and involve no sudden break with the past.

3. On the 19th December I received a reply from the Prime Minister of Nepal which reads as follows....<sup>4</sup> We appreciate the friendly tone of this reply and have no desire to hurry the Government of Nepal. At the same time, we cannot ignore the fact that delay in a settlement is likely to make the situation worse. The world situation, unfortunately, has grown darker since we discussed

1. Statement in Parliament, 21 December 1950. *Parliamentary Debates, Official Report*, 1950, Vol.VII, Part II, cols 2138-2142. Extracts.

2. See *post*, pp. 432-434.

3. In the memorandum it was suggested that King Tribhuvan should continue to be the King of Nepal and during his absence he might appoint a Regent to act on his behalf and a constituent assembly composed of properly elected members should draw up a Constitution for Nepal as soon as possible. Meanwhile an interim government consisting of popular representatives as well as some members of the Rana family, one of whom might be the Prime Minister, should be established. This Government should function as a cabinet on the principle of joint responsibility.

4. Mohan Shamsheer stated that the matter was being actively considered by his Cabinet and he hoped to announce constitutional reforms before the end of the month.

international affairs earlier this month. It is our firm conviction that the longer political reforms and a satisfactory settlement are delayed in Nepal, the greater the danger to Nepal's security and internal tranquillity.

4. The suggestions that we made in our memorandum were made in a spirit of sincere friendship and with the sole object of ensuring the stability and progress of Nepal. They were formulated after great care and in the hope that these suggestions will be examined and dealt with by the Government of Nepal in the spirit in which they had been offered.

5. As I have stated previously, we have continued to recognise His Majesty King Tribhuvan Bir Bikram Shah; we feel that, in all the circumstances, this is the right course, and any discontinuance of recognition would produce many complications and would come in the way of a peaceful settlement. Any other arrangement, such as the replacement of the constitutional head of the kingdom by a Council of Regency, appointed by the Prime Minister to act in the name of child King, would make the introduction and smooth working of progressive constitutional changes more difficult.

6. As the House is aware, we have observed the strictest neutrality in the internal struggle in Nepal. Our officers in the border areas have been instructed accordingly, and they have carried out these instructions. In some of these areas within Nepal, some of our officers and men are carrying out public works in which both the Government of India and the Government of Nepal are interested. One of these major activities is in connection with the Kosi river project. The work of our men there has been considerably interfered with on account of the disturbed state of the country. In strict accord with our policy of neutrality, we have asked the Nepal Government to take necessary measures for enabling this work to be carried on and have taken no other steps to protect our personnel or property.

## 32. Anti-Indian Activities in Nepal<sup>1</sup>

The situation is developing rapidly in Nepal. It is no longer confined to the border areas where volunteers of the Nepali Congress carry on their activities.

1. Note to the Secretary-General, M.E.A., 28 December 1950. J.N. Collection.



Almost daily incidents are happening in Kathmandu itself. There has been firing on repeated occasions and many persons have been killed.<sup>2</sup>

What is more serious from our point of view is the active anti-Indian propaganda that is being carried on by the Nepal Government; the incident of a member of the staff of our Embassy being severely beaten<sup>3</sup>; and the order of the Nepal Government that members of the Indian Embassy should not leave the Embassy compound.

I think we should take a strong line and inform the Nepal Government through their Ambassador that we cannot tolerate these activities. We are not prepared to believe their version in regard to Tribeni Shukla.<sup>4</sup> On the face of it, it is exceedingly improbable and we prefer to believe the version of our own Embassy. The Nepal Government should express its regret for these incidents, withdraw the order about our staff members not leaving the Embassy compound, and give adequate protection to Indian nationals in Nepal. Apart from this, it must be made clear what their attitude is to us and to our Embassy. We are not prepared to submit to the treatment and the restrictions to which our Embassy is being subjected. If our Embassy is not welcome and cannot remain there honourably, then it is better for them to come back to India.

Some urgent steps should be taken, because we have got to send instructions to our people there.

In regard to the Maharaja's reply to our note, it should be clearly stated that we are totally unable to accept it even as the basis for further conversations. The first thing to be made clear is that the King continues as such. In fact, if our own memorandum is not treated as the basis of conversation, there is no room for further talks.

We shall be going away to London soon and it is highly likely that other and more serious developments may take place in our absence. Our position should, therefore, be clearly and firmly stated and at the next meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committee we should consider what other steps we may have to take.

Our Ambassador at Kathmandu should be invited to the meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

2. On 25 December, one person died due to lathi charge by police on demonstrators, and on 27 December, six persons were killed and fifteen injured in police firing on a procession in Kathmandu.
3. On 26 December, two Indians of whom one was an employee in the Indian Embassy were beaten by police in Kathmandu.
4. An employee of the Indian Embassy beaten by the police.



### 33. Cable to Rafi Ahmed Kidwai<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram about Nepal.<sup>2</sup> I have not received full details of Nepal Government's announcement.<sup>3</sup> I was informed that interim government would consist of fourteen, of which seven would be from Rana family and seven from popular parties. Nothing was said about existing puppet ministers continuing. I think considering all circumstances we should accept announcement but should insist on puppet ministers not continuing. This is matter for subsequent discussion. Announcement as a whole is far-reaching and constitutes great popular victory. Authoritarian regime is broken up and process of change to full popular government begun. World recognises this as India's victory. Whole set-up and our relations with Nepal changed. It would be wrong in not treating it as such victory and thus minimising its significance and our capacity to influence future developments. I am quite sure that we should appeal to popular forces to stop violent activities and, accepting principal points conceded, discuss details. King's return itself, in circumstances, is of primary importance and breaks old regime. Constitution of new interim government is not permanent feature and can be changed as circumstances require. Meanwhile, it is important that proper ministers should be appointed from popular side. If we quarrel over relatively small details now, we might jeopardise very substantial gains. Situation would drift and become unmanageable.

I hope, therefore, that you will help in taking full advantage of new developments and induce others to do so also. Nepal has to be seen in larger context of world events.

1. London, 10 January 1951. J.N. Collection. Nehru was at this time in London attending the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference.
2. Kidwai telegraphed on 9 January that he was shocked to learn that the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Cabinet had accepted the Nepal Government's announcement of 8 January proposing a new cabinet which would include "two existing puppet ministers" in the quota fixed for seven popular ministers. He stated that this would not be acceptable to the Nepali Congress and others and requested Nehru not to issue any statement in favour of the proposals.
3. It was announced that a constituent assembly, freely elected on the basis of adult franchise, would soon be summoned to frame a new Constitution for Nepal. Meantime, a cabinet consisting of fourteen ministers, seven of whom represented the popular elements, would be formed and it would hold the executive powers of government. Amnesty would be granted to political prisoners and others if violence was renounced and ceasefire effected. As, in accordance with the suggestion of the Government of India that King Tribhuvan should continue to be the King, the boy King had not been recognised by any country, it had been decided that the King might appoint a Regent during the period of his absence from Nepal.

### 34. Cable to C. Rajagopalachari<sup>1</sup>

Please see my telegram to Kidwai. I am surprised to learn that two puppet ministers are supposed to continue in proposed interim government for Nepal. This reduces real popular element to five in fourteen. I hope you will not accept this. There must be minimum of seven popular ministers chosen by others than Ranas. Even Rana ministers should be chosen in consultation with popular leaders so as to produce, as far as possible, homogeneous cabinet.

I am not sending you any statement for publication at present.<sup>2</sup>

1. London, 10 January 1951. J.N. Collection.
2. Rajagopalachari had informed Nehru on 8 January that the Foreign Affairs Committee had found the Nepal Government declaration "on the whole satisfactory", and requested him, on behalf of the Committee, to issue an appeal for ceasefire and cooperation in the restoration of order to facilitate speedy implementation of the declaration.

### 35. Welcome Changes in Nepal<sup>1</sup>

I am happy to learn that an announcement has been made about certain changes and reforms in Nepal. The future Constitution of Nepal will be decided by the people of Nepal themselves. Meanwhile, an interim government has been proposed and the King will go back to Nepal to take his proper part in the new arrangement.

This is a substantial step forward and it guarantees the establishment of full democratic government later. The old authoritarian government ends with these changes and further changes will, of course, follow in due course, according to the will of the Nepalese people. These are great<sup>2</sup> advances and I should like to congratulate the people of Nepal on them. How best they can be utilised in the present and in leading to a fuller freedom, depends now upon the people of Nepal themselves.

I earnestly trust that full advantage will be taken of these changes and all those who have struggled and suffered for the freedom of Nepal will now cooperate in this great undertaking of changing a century-old autocracy to an independent, democratic State. In particular, I hope that all attempts at violent change will cease and efforts will be directed<sup>3</sup> towards peaceful cooperation and progress.

1. Message sent from London on 11 January and printed in newspapers in India, 12 January 1951.
2. In the message published in the press, this word was replaced by 'right'.
3. In the published message, the words 'efforts will be directed' were replaced by the following words: 'I appeal to all concerned to direct their efforts.'



### 36. Telegram to Govind Ballabh Pant<sup>1</sup>

In spite of settlement in Nepal and ceasefire, sporadic incidents sometimes continue. You have also sent us reports about individuals or groups continuing to loot and otherwise misbehave.<sup>2</sup> I hope your Government will take all necessary steps on your side of the border to prevent this kind of happening. If any people who cross into Nepal are suspected of this kind of activity, they should be prevented from going there. It should be made perfectly clear that we cannot tolerate the continuance of this activity. We should not, however, enter Nepal territory for this purpose.

1. New Delhi, 3 February 1951. File No. 21/2/51-Poll., M.H.A. A similar telegram was sent to the Chief Minister of Bihar.
2. A group of insurgents under K.I. Singh in particular was very active near Bhairahawa and another near Tootibari. It was also reported that there was persistent harassment in this area of Indian citizens owning property in Nepal.

### 37. To Mohan Shamsher Jung Bahadur Rana<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 11, 1951

My dear friend,

As General Bijaya is returning to Kathmandu, I am availing myself of this opportunity to send Your Highness a word of greeting. I have not written to you for some months, but we have been in touch with each other through our respective Ambassadors and through General Bijaya who has been here for some days.

Nepal has passed through trying times and is now on the eve of a big change. I can well imagine how hard it must have been for Your Highness to witness many of the events that have taken place in recent months. Any marked change from an established order brings certain upsets and it is not always pleasant to have to go through these changes and upsets. For a person in Your Highness's position, this must have been particularly distressing. Nevertheless you had the wisdom to accept these changes and to adapt yourself and your country to them. I must congratulate you on this act of statesmanship. As I had ventured to point out to Your Highness previously, Asia was in a state of ferment and it seemed inevitable that all countries in Asia would be affected by it. It was a path of wisdom not to wait for such changes but to introduce them oneself. The old order might be good for a particular period, but it may well become an anachronism in a later period.

1. J.N. Collection.



We live in difficult and dangerous times and the world hovers on the verge of war. Such a war will bring terrible disasters all over the world and so we have been trying, to the best of our ability, to work for peace. In Asia strong movements are at work affecting all our countries.

Many abnormal things have happened in Nepal during the past two or three months, but I think it might be said with perfect truth that, on the whole, far-reaching changes are taking place in Nepal without too much upset and with a large measure of agreement. For this all parties concerned must be congratulated. But it is obvious that many difficulties lie ahead and it will require all the patience and perseverance of those in authority to surmount these difficulties. It will require a spirit of cooperation and forbearance. The past will no doubt be remembered, but it should not be allowed to cast its shadow on the present or the future. Old controversies and conflicts should be ended as far as possible, so that Nepal may start a new order with goodwill and a spirit of cooperation among all. This new order, I earnestly trust, will have the benefit of Your Highness's ripe experience.

It is my earnest hope that Nepal will make rapid progress and will maintain her place among the free and independent nations of the world. India has the friendliest feelings towards Nepal. She has no desire to interfere, but her help and advice are always available.

With all good wishes,

I am,  
Yours very sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### 38. Cable to C.P.N. Singh<sup>1</sup>

We communicated to you yesterday information about further murders and atrocities committed by Dr Singh<sup>2</sup> and his armed gang of two hundred men.<sup>3</sup> Situation is becoming intolerable and urgent organised action is necessary to capture whole gang. For this purpose joint action between Nepal Government

1. New Delhi, 13 February 1951. File No. 21/2/51-Poll., M.H.A.
2. Kunwar Indrajit Singh (1906-1982); studied medicine in Calcutta; joined Nepali Rashtriya Congress Party, 1946; took part in the 1950 uprising; imprisoned for six months in 1952; took political asylum in China, 1952-55; returned to Nepal after royal amnesty, 1955; founded Samyukta Prajatantra Party, 1955; Prime Minister for four months in 1957; imprisoned, 1963-65; Member, Rashtriya Panchayat, 1971-75.
3. A section of the Nepali Congress which fought at the Bhairahawa front in western Nepal under the leadership of Kunwar Indrajit Singh rejected any compromise with the Ranas and the Delhi talks. They refused to accept the ceasefire order of the interim cabinet of Nepal and continued their armed struggle.

NEPAL

and U.P. Government desirable. Please approach Nepal Government immediately and suggest such joint action to them, as well as permission for our armed police or other forces to cross border in order to capture gang. U.P. Government prepared for this and is awaiting our directions. Without joint action Singh and gang will not be captured and may spread out in small numbers. Please inform me immediately of Nepal Government's reply.<sup>4</sup>

4. Singh with his retinue of two hundred fifty-seven men was captured at Bhairahawa through Indo-Nepalese joint action on 19 February and placed in a detention camp.

### 39. To C.P.N. Singh<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

NEPAL

Nepal Government

and U.P. Government desirable. Please approach

trouble, unless effective steps are taken. Such steps will not be easy in the early days. During the actual days of transition, the police will be in nobody's control. I suggest therefore that the new Government should first get going and then announce a public meeting after taking full precautions that it is a success and nobody can do mischief.

Your telegram refers to the great difficulties you are having in regard to the formation of the interim government. It is hardly possible for me to advise from this distance. On the whole, I am inclined to think that the best course would be to start off with a really small cabinet of six, that is, three plus three. The others can be added soon after. We have to get going as soon as possible. I should not delay the formation of the interim government by more than two or three days at the most. The longer the delay, the more the confusion. Therefore it might be advisable to start with a small number and then think about additions.

About the person<sup>3</sup> to whom great objection is taken by the Maharaja, I can appreciate his difficulty. Normally speaking, it is rather extraordinary to think of appointing a person who is still in prison at present to ministerial office a few hours later. In this case the charges, whatever the truth in them, are serious. On the other hand, as you pointed out, the man is very popular. The proper course would be for the man to be released and some interval to elapse before any further step is taken. If the charges are purely political, then they should offer no great difficulty. If, on the other hand, they are also other than political, then some proper enquiry and explanation should be given. However, it is for you and others in Kathmandu now to consider this question. It would be rather unfortunate for our present arrangement to break down on this issue. The Maharaja would have some justification in advancing the argument that a person in prison charged with serious offences was thrust down upon him and therefore he had no other recourse but to resign.

I am merely putting before you some thoughts that have occurred to me. I cannot at this distance suggest anything definite or precise, except what I have said above.

I am going to Lucknow on the 16th afternoon and returning to Delhi on the 18th morning.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. Ganesh Man Singh. He was eventually included in the interim cabinet of Nepal as minister for commerce and industry.



13

KOREA



## 1. Recent Developments in East and South Asia<sup>1</sup>

The recent developments in international affairs have to be considered by us carefully with a view to the policy we should pursue in the U.N., in regard to our neighbouring countries, in regard to China, and with reference to our defence problems.

Our foreign policy has been based on a desire to help in the maintenance of world peace or, at any rate, in the avoidance of war on a large scale. Because of this we have avoided any alignment with any particular Power or group of Powers and have attempted to follow an independent policy, judging each question on its merits and from the point of view of world peace. The attitude that we have taken up in regard to Korea has been vigorously criticised from time to time. At the same time, there has been a good deal of appreciation of it. The recent developments<sup>2</sup> have, on the whole, justified that policy and have indicated, even to many of our critics, that it was unwise to ignore our advice.<sup>3</sup> It is clear now that the warning that the Chinese Government gave about the crossing of the 38th parallel<sup>4</sup> was not a mere bluff. Although they did not take immediate action when this line was crossed, it does appear that that was a moment when their entire policy underwent a vital change. They came to the conclusion then that they had to support North Korea even though this might involve them in a war with the U.S.A. and possibly other countries. That support is now being given, though rather informally at first,<sup>5</sup> and this has brought about a material change in the military situation in Korea. It seems clear now that the U.N. forces will not be able to occupy the whole of North Korea unless very large reinforcements are sent to them. Even so, this might involve a war with China with all that it implies. A war with China is not likely to be confined and other great countries will probably be drawn into it some time or other. Thus we are on the verge of a world conflict.

1. Note, 8 November 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. Crossing the 38th parallel on 8 October 1950, U.N. forces initially made rapid progress in their drive towards the northern frontiers, but their advance was strongly resisted about fifty miles south of the Manchurian border. The presence of Chinese troops fighting in support of the North Koreans was increasingly reported from the end of October and General MacArthur, the head of the U.N. Command, stated on 5 November that U.N. forces were in hostile contact with Chinese military units.

3. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 400-403.

4. The warning that entry of U.N. forces into North Korea would be treated as a hostile act and resisted by China was conveyed on 3 October through K.M. Panikkar, India's Ambassador in China.

5. China maintained that the Chinese forces fighting in Korea were not her regular forces but volunteer units comprising "workers and peasants".



If our advice had been followed in regard to the 38th parallel, it might have been possible to bring the whole of North Korea under U.N. supervision and military operations could have ceased. There would have been no danger then of a world conflict arising from that issue.

The Chinese explanation of the action they have taken is that they are afraid of an attack of their country and cannot therefore look on while the military and other situation in the Far East develops unfavourably to them and North Korea is crushed.<sup>6</sup> How far this is a justification is arguable, but it does appear to be a fact that the Chinese believe it. I think that our Ambassador at Peking has not always represented our point of view with sufficient force to the Chinese Government. I do not think, however, that the Chinese Government was in any doubt about our point of view; nor do I think that a more forcible expression of it would have made a great difference in the circumstances. Our Ambassador informed us of the Chinese point of view and this information turns out to be correct.

We have to think now, therefore, in terms of an extension of the war to China, the possibility, as envisaged by General MacArthur, of large-scale bombing of the Chinese mainland and more especially of Manchuria.<sup>7</sup> If once this begins, it is difficult to think that it will not spread to other areas of the world. In other words, it will be a prelude to world war. It is in this larger context that we should view events.

It may still be possible to avoid this development, though the chances of doing so become more and more remote. The only chance appears to be for the Great Powers, such as the U.S.A., the U.K., the U.S.S.R., China and some others, to meet together. It is not possible to solve any question in the Far East without the cooperation of China. That has been our consistent attitude. The condemnation of China by the U.N. may be justified on legal or other grounds but it must be remembered that this only exacerbates China and does not frighten her or check her. It gives a legal sanction of some kind for an attack on China. In other words, it leads to that widespread conflict which we have sought to avoid.

In these circumstances what should be our attitude in the U.N.? We have to face there consequences of action which we disapproved. As far as I can

6. Several "democratic parties" of China declared on 4 November that the Chinese people were "enthusiastically volunteering" to resist the Americans as it was not only their moral duty to support the Korean people but U.S. aggression was seriously threatening the security of China.
7. MacArthur stated on 6 November that "communist alien forces" had moved into North Korea from Manchuria and U.N. forces were faced with a new and fresh army backed by the possibility of a large reserve and supplies "beyond the limits of our present sphere of military action". He added, "Our present mission is limited to the destruction of those forces now arrayed against us in North Korea."

see, we should avoid still associating ourselves with any action on the part of the U.S.A. or the U.N. in the Far East which leads to this wider conflict.

China's action in Tibet has been rightly resented by us for a variety of reasons.<sup>8</sup> The manner of it is still more objectionable. Yet I do not think that we can call this a studied deception of us because at no time did they modify their basic attitude towards Tibet and their desire to incorporate it more fully into China. What we object to is the extreme discourtesy which they have shown to us in this respect. This may be due to the general fear of a world conflict and, therefore, to solve the Tibetan problem, according to their lights, before this world conflict begins.

China's aggression in Tibet immediately raises new frontier problems for us. We cannot be happy to have a strong centralized and communist Government in control of the Tibetan border with India and yet there are no obvious means of stopping this, and even legally our position is not a strong one. Various questions arise:

1. If China demands, and she is certain to do so, we shall have to withdraw our Representative<sup>9</sup> at Lhasa and our military escort at Gyantse. We cannot keep them there against the wishes of the occupying Power and we cannot go to war on this issue. We may, or may not, keep a Trade Agent in Gyantse, but that also will depend upon the goodwill of the Chinese and our relations with them. It is possible that our frontier line itself may be challenged as it had been challenged by the previous Chinese Governments. In regard to this we have to be perfectly clear and we are in fact on strong ground. We consider the McMahon Line as our frontier and we are not prepared, on any account, to reconsider this question.

2. The security of our border areas: It would be desirable to have a military appreciation, but I do not think that there is any danger of military operations on any scale there. The only possibility of such operations will be if there was a world war and if India was a belligerent country opposed to China. Even then no major operations are likely there because not only of the difficulties of the terrain, but the fact that the war will be fought in other vital theatres. What we have to guard against is infiltration and intrusion of small groups. That is possible though even that is not too easy. Therefore, some kind of strengthening of our frontier posts is necessary from the point of view of watch and ward as well as intelligence. It is also necessary to improve our communications to Assam and adjoining borders. This might involve the erection of some airfields.

It is desirable for us to have as close association as possible with Burma. It is not quite clear to me what steps we can take to this end, apart from close

8. See *ante*, Section 11.

9. S. Sinha, Officer-in-Charge, Indian Mission in Lhasa.



contact and frequent consultations. Any kind of military alliance with Burma would, I think, be dangerous and put a great burden on us which we can hardly carry.

In regard to Nepal,<sup>10</sup> we cannot recognise the deposition of the King and the enthronement of his baby grandson. The Nepal Government have acted very improperly and discourteously to us in this matter. They will have to face many difficulties. If they continue to be offensive and aggressive towards us, we may have to take some economic measures against them. We cannot possibly submit to the Nepal Government at this stage because that would have very unfortunate consequences both for Nepal and India.

The question of Chinese entry into U.N.O. is hardly likely to arise soon. Indeed the question is of condemning China as an aggressor. We should take no steps to raise the question of China's admission. If, however, it is raised then it will have to be considered in the then context. As I have said above, whatever satisfaction we may have in showing our displeasure of China, the important fact to be remembered is what leads to world war and what checks it. We should, therefore, be very cautious and not throw our weight in the scales on this side or that. If, nevertheless, war comes we should still try to keep out of it and await developments.

10. See *ante*, Section 12.

## 2. The Mind of MacArthur<sup>1</sup>

Yesterday morning I dictated the attached note<sup>2</sup> on recent developments in international affairs. I did so partly to clear my own mind on the subject. Yesterday also, in the course of the afternoon, there was some discussion in Cabinet about the general international situation and, more especially, Nepal, Tibet, Korea and China.

2. The telegram we have received from our representative in Tokyo<sup>3</sup> this morning is a revealing one. This gives us a glimpse into the mind of General MacArthur who, it appears, is so angry and upset at the turn events have taken, contrary to his expectation, that he wants to destroy utterly and rase to the ground great cities like Dairen, Harbin, Mukden, Peking, Shanghai and Nanking. For a man in this state of mind to be in command of operations in

1. Note to the Secretary-General, M.E.A., 9 November 1950, J.N. Collection.

2. See the preceding item.

3. K.K. Chettur, Head of the Indian Liaison Mission in Tokyo.



the Far East is obviously full of danger. U.N. policies are, no doubt, affected by General MacArthur's reports and advice. There can be no doubt that if MacArthur had his way, there would immediately be war on a wider scale and uttermost destruction.

3. All this leads to the conclusion that we have to be exceedingly careful about our own attitude in the U.N. and elsewhere.

4. This note, as well as the attached note, might be circulated to members of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

### 3. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

Separate telegram contains instructions regarding U.K. and U.S.A. resolution.<sup>2</sup>

2. Situation in Korea is exceedingly dangerous.<sup>3</sup> On one side the Chinese Government has evidently decided even to risk war on large scale but not to submit to further advance of U.N. troops towards Manchurian frontier. On the other hand MacArthur, according to a report received by us from our representative in Tokyo, is exceedingly angry because his plans have been completely upset by Chinese intervention. He appears to be anxious to bomb and raze great cities in China to the ground. It is interesting to note that he now denies having encouraged move beyond the 38th parallel which he now says should have been confined wholly to South Korean troops.<sup>4</sup> This extraordinary state of mind of U.N. Commander is a menace and exceedingly dangerous. Today's papers contain news of almost utter destruction by bombing of Sinuiju, North Korean refugee capital.<sup>5</sup> This kind of thing produces strong unfavourable reactions here and, if persisted in, can only lead to bitter and widespread war of mutual extermination. Any step that the U.N. might take should bear this situation in mind. The stakes are too high and vital for any of us to be swept away by anger.

1. New Delhi, 9 November 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. See the next item.

3. Heavy attacks by North Korean and Chinese forces on 5 November compelled withdrawals by U.N. forces in north-west Korea. The U.N. Command was understood to be losing about 1,000 men a day.

4. South Korean troops crossed into North Korea on 1 October 1950.

5. In one of the heaviest air attacks of the Korean war carried out by 300 U.S. aircraft on 8 November, Sinuiju town on the Yalu river, serving as the temporary capital of North Korea after the capture of Pyongyang on 19 October, was largely destroyed.

3. This is for your own information, but you may privately bring this to notice of others.

#### 4. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram 411 dated 7th November.<sup>2</sup> We agree with you that Peace Observation Commission<sup>3</sup> will be a better body to consider and report on the situation than the Interim Committee on Korea or the U.N. Commission for Korea. There is far greater prospect of some amicable adjustment emerging from Peace Observation Commission, on which all Great Powers are represented, than from other bodies.

2. The situation is so dangerous and explosive that every effort should be made to lessen tension and dispel fears. We doubt whether resolution goes far enough to dispel Chinese fears. Nevertheless effort should be made to dispel these fears as far as possible. If some territory in North Korea, in which the Chinese have a direct interest because of location of their power plant, etc.,<sup>4</sup> could be declared immune from military action, the Chinese would have less provocation for interference in Korean conflict. Chinese representatives will shortly be coming to Lake Success in another connection,<sup>5</sup> and it would perhaps be best to discuss the situation with them.

1. New Delhi, 9 November 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Rau stated that the U.S.A. and the U.K. intended to move in the Security Council a resolution calling on all concerned States to desist from any encouragement to the North Koreans and assuring China that her legitimate interests above and along the border with Korea would be protected. The UNCURK and the Interim Committee on Korea, the body set up by the General Assembly pending the arrival in Korea of the UNCURK, were requested to assist in resolving any problems relating to conditions on the frontier. The resolution, sponsored by Cuba, Ecuador, France, Norway, the U.K. and the U.S.A., was introduced on 10 November.
3. The fourteen-member subsidiary body of the General Assembly which could be called upon to observe and report on the situation in any area causing international tension.
4. Industries in Manchuria depended for their power supply on hydro-electric plants located at dams on the Yalu river.
5. To attend the Security Council discussions with regard to the Chinese complaint of armed invasion of Formosa.



3. You should support proposal for inviting representatives of Peking.<sup>6</sup> But you should vote against proposal for inviting representatives of North Korean authorities.

6. On 8 November, the Security Council decided to invite representatives of People's China to participate in the Council's discussion of MacArthur's report of 5 November.

## 5. Message to Ernest Bevin<sup>1</sup>

I thank you for your message regarding Korea, conveyed to me today by your High Commissioner, and text of your communication to Chou En-lai.<sup>2</sup> I fully share your apprehensions arising from recent developments in Korea<sup>3</sup> and the imperative need, in interests of world peace, of prompt action to prevent present conflict from expanding into a world war. You may recall that, when the United Nations were debating the question of crossing the 38th parallel, I repeatedly drew attention to danger of Chinese intervention, of which our Ambassador in Peking kept on warning us.<sup>4</sup> Chinese psychology, with its background of prolonged suffering, struggle against Japan, and successful communist revolution, is an understandable mixture of bitterness, elation and vaulting confidence to which the traditional xenophobia and present day isolation from outside contacts have added fear and suspicion of motives of other Powers. For inducing a more balanced and cooperative mentality in Peking, it is essential to understand these psychological factors. I think that the idea of reaching a solution of the Korean dispute on the basis of a demilitarized area on the North Korean side of the Manchurian border<sup>5</sup> is a good one. I also agree that a settlement on this basis should be sought in negotiation with the Chinese delegates, now on their way to New York, when

1. New Delhi, 20 November 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. It contained an elucidation of U.N. objectives in Korea, an assurance from Britain that Chinese boundaries would be respected and a suggestion that there should be discussion with Chinese representatives at Lake Success.

3. Though the North Korean and Chinese troops made little contact with U.N. forces, Chinese forces were reported to have crossed into Korea in large numbers and been deployed near the Manchurian border.

4. See messages from Nehru to Bevin, 27 and 28 September 1950, published in *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 400-403. Telegrams dated 3 October 1950 received from K.M. Panikkar (*Ibid*, p. 409) were also transmitted to Attlee and Bevin.

5. Bevin suggested temporary demilitarization of part of North Korea above the 40th parallel.



they arrive there (I understand that they have been delayed and will not be reaching America before 23rd). But China is vitally interested in future of a close neighbour like Korea and should also be assured participation in an overall Korean settlement.

2. I am satisfied that although the Korean situation must be dealt with first, China's active participation in international affairs must remain our objective, if the prevailing tensions are to be materially diminished. For this purpose, China's entry into the United Nations is absolutely necessary. Without this, her present mood of distrust and frustration, fed from a source which I need not particularise, will endure and, in the troubled state of the world, will continue to create fresh problems and difficulties. This matter has to be decided quickly, and I think it can be decided only in favour of Peking. Now that the American elections are over,<sup>6</sup> there can be no further justification for postponing a decision. I recognise that the result of these elections has been unfavourable to American circles who take a balanced view of Chinese claims, but clearly delay can avail little and no one would favour postponement of question of China's admission to the U.N. until after American elections of 1952. I would strongly urge you to give this matter your attention. We have been consistent in our support of China's entry into the U.N., but feel it useless to take the initiative unless the requisite support of other nations is forthcoming.

3. I am telegraphing to our Ambassador in Peking to reinforce the efforts of your Charge d'Affaires<sup>7</sup> for a peaceful settlement in Korea.

6. In the Congressional mid-term elections held on 7 November, the Democrats retained their majorities in both Houses but with reduced margins.
7. John Colville Hutchison.

## 6. Need for a Peaceful Approach<sup>1</sup>

The position in the Far East is so dangerous that it would almost appear that war on a wide scale is inevitable.<sup>2</sup> Yet one does not lose hope, or one does

1. Note to the Secretary-General, M.E.A., 30 November 1950. J.N. Collection. Instructions based on this note were conveyed to B.N. Rau the same day.
2. U.N. forces launched on 24 November a major offensive in north-west Korea, but strong counter-attacks by Chinese and North Korean forces made them continuously retreat in all sectors. MacArthur stated on 28 November that over 200,000 Chinese troops were arrayed against U.N. forces and that the situation posed issues beyond the authority of the U.N. Command and "which must find their solution within the councils of the U.N. and the chancelleries of the world."

not want to lose hope, and there is undoubtedly a fear of war which itself may prevent it. For a long time it appeared that the U.S.A., or at any rate certain powerful sections in the U.S.A., were in favour of having war. At that time it could be said that China did not want war and wished to avoid it, so also the U.S.S.R. So far as other countries were concerned, such as the U.K., they have all along been extremely desirous of avoiding a big conflict.

Now it appears from our own Ambassador's communications, as well as from other material, that the Government of China have come to the conclusion that war is inevitable, and are fully preparing for it. In the U.S.A., there is probably divided opinion on this subject. There is undoubtedly a war party but there is also a keen realisation of the consequences of war and a desire to avoid it. Thus far it was probably thought that the best way to avoid war was to show that the U.S.A. was fully prepared for it and could afford to take a strong line without having to face any very serious risk. That stage is now past and there is no room left for either party bluffing the other. A false move may well precipitate the conflict.

In this context we can do very little. The U.K. is apparently trying to prevent any such development. The old draft resolution, called the six-Power resolution on Korea,<sup>3</sup> is rather out of date now and seems academical. Any such resolution has to be considered from the point of view of our trying, insofar as we can, to lessen tension or merely as a step towards the war that is bound to come. I think that the former attitude is more correct, even though it may not yield results.

If that is so, then the proper course for us is to pursue the policy which you have indicated in clause (a) of your note, that is, for us to state that this matter is essentially one for settlement by negotiation in which all the parties concerned should behave with moderation and restraint and with a single eye to peace. From this clause (b) flows, that is, to have a breathing time for such negotiation, and for this purpose to recommend cessation of hostilities and the creation of a demilitarized zone.

This is a practical and reasonable approach to the problem as it is today. There is no point, that is, if we desire peace, to condemn or to name a country as an aggressor<sup>4</sup> at this stage, as this inevitably puts an end to all ideas of peace. Personally I would be content if even clause (a) is adopted

3. See *ante*, p. 412, footnote 2.

4. On 28 November, an official of the State Department, with the approval of the U.S. President, publicly charged China with aggression in Korea. The same day, while the charge was repeated in the Security Council by the U.S. representative, Wu Hsiu-chuan, representative of People's China, proposed in his maiden speech in the Council condemnation of the U.S. for "invasion and occupation" of Formosa and "armed intervention" in Korea and demanded withdrawal of U.S. forces from there and imposition of sanctions against her.



and (b) is left immediately for negotiation, but (a) and (b) can go together as one follows the other. The question what the demilitarized zone should be and other details of a ceasefire might well be left for negotiation if the general principle is agreed to.

I agree with you, therefore, that Shri B.N. Rau should speak to the U.S. and the U.K. on these lines. If there is a favourable response, he could approach China also.

If the U.S.A. and the U.K. agree (and the U.K. will probably agree), then the resolution should be amended accordingly. If China also agrees, there would be no great difficulty. If China refuses to agree to the resolution as amended at our suggestion, then we should vote for the amended resolution. In the event of the sponsors not amending the resolution as suggested by us and sticking to the present resolution, we should not participate in the voting.<sup>5</sup> In that event Shri B.N. Rau can explain our own approach and lay stress on what is contained in (a) and (b) of your note.

There is no particular point now in our moving the amendments which we had suggested previously. A point that should be emphasised is that in the critical situation that we are facing it is not good statesmanship or good tactics, either in resolution or in debate, to be aggressive and irritating. If peace is sought for, the approach must be one of peace and condemnations, although there is plenty of room for them, should be avoided.

5. The six-Power resolution was vetoed by the Soviet Union on 30 November, although it had received nine affirmative votes, with India abstaining.

## 7. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

Your telegrams 468, 472 and 473. We have already sent you today instructions governing our general attitude.<sup>2</sup> In view of very grave situation, every action should be judged from the point of view of encouraging war or peace. Condemnation of any country will certainly not help negotiation or peaceful consideration of any problem. This is no time for legal niceties or for long discussions on merits. Strong lead should be given for earnest attempt by all concerned to find way out by negotiation. Hence Chinese resolution, if introduced, must be opposed.

1. New Delhi, 30 November 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. See the preceding item.



2. Suggest your explaining our attitude fully to other delegations, more especially Indonesia, Burma and Afghanistan.

3. We have no objection to Jamsaheb<sup>3</sup> accepting chairmanship of Negotiating Committee over Korean rehabilitation.<sup>4</sup>

3. The Jam Saheb of Nawanager was at the time a member of the Indian delegation to the fifth session of the General Assembly.
4. The U.N. Korean Reconstruction Agency, set up by the General Assembly on 1 December 1950, was to be assisted by a Negotiating Committee for consulting with Member and non-Member States to arrange finances for operating the programme of relief and rehabilitation in Korea.

## 8. Message to C.R. Attlee<sup>1</sup>

Your High Commissioner informed me yesterday of your plan to visit Washington. I am very glad to learn that you will be meeting President Truman and I hope that this meeting may lead to some lessening of the tension that is paralysing the world and that might lead to terrible catastrophe. Our good wishes go with you in your efforts to avert world war.

There is naturally a great deal of anxiety here about recent developments and President Truman's mention of the possible use of the atom bomb<sup>2</sup> has heightened crisis. My colleagues and I are anxious to help insofar as we can in any effort to avoid world war. We feel that this should be primary objective at the present. This cannot be achieved by mutual recrimination and condemnation and calling each other aggressors. The only way appears to be for representatives of the Great Powers to meet together and find some way of stopping progressively deteriorating situation. Even temporary improvement would give opportunity for finding solution and lighten the world's burden today. Such an approach should only be made by the Great Powers and must include China. It might be based on ceasefire in Korea followed by demarcation of demilitarised zone.

1. New Delhi, 2 December 1950. Copy in V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. On 30 November, Truman said that the U.S. might use whatever weapons she had, including the atomic bomb, to meet the military situation in Korea. Asked whether the use of the atomic bomb was under active consideration, he replied, "There has always been active consideration of its use. I don't want to see it used."

Whatever may be considered the approach if it has to be successful it must be frank and aimed at peace.

Pearson<sup>3</sup> has suggested to me that I make a public appeal for an immediate ceasefire in Korea and for the cessation of Chinese armed intervention so that possibility of a settlement in which Peking Government could participate might be explored. I would gladly make public or private appeal which might help the cause of peace but I am reluctant to take any step that may end in worsening rather than improving chances of achieving our objective. Unless both China and U.S.A. are prepared to agree to any proposal more harm than good might be done by my making it. There must necessarily be a will to negotiate a settlement in preference to acrimonious debate and exchange of charges of aggression.

If ceasefire could be agreed to be followed by demarcation of demilitarised zone, the whole question of a settlement first in Korea and later in respect of Formosa can be negotiated. I mention Formosa because I am convinced that unless a satisfactory settlement of its future in accordance with the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations<sup>4</sup> is reached in the near future, there will be no real peace in the Far East. I am not condoning Chinese intervention in Korea when I make this suggestion. We have however to face realities. Chinese have worked themselves up to a conviction that the U.S.A. has aggressive designs against them. Their continued expulsion from the U.N. under what they regard as U.S. leadership and continued U.S. recognition of Chiang Kai-shek has helped to foster this impression of American intentions however unjustified it might be. Many people not just in Asia but elsewhere feel there is at least some justification for Chinese resentment over these two matters. The risk of war with China over Chinese intervention in Korea when Chinese can claim denial of their legitimate right as regards entry into the U.N. and rendition to them of Formosa as justification of their action will only obscure issue and put U.N. in the wrong. I cannot therefore emphasise too strongly the need of evolving a clear policy not only as regards Korea but also Formosa and China's entry into the U.N. I repeat that ceasefire and creation of a demilitarised zone in Korea must have priority. But if there is to be an overall settlement in the Far East then these two other questions must be included in the scope of negotiations that may follow.

3. Lester Pearson was at the time the Foreign Minister of Canada.

4. The Cairo Declaration of 1 December 1943 stated that a conference between Roosevelt, Churchill and Chiang Kai-shek had decided that "all territories that Japan has stolen from the Chinese, such as Manchuria, Formosa, and the Pescadores, shall be restored to the Republic of China." This decision was reaffirmed by the Potsdam Declaration, on 26 July 1945, signed by Truman, Churchill and Attlee and subsequently approved by Chiang.



In view of what I have said I am not at present thinking of making an appeal on the lines suggested by Pearson. I should be prepared however to make a short statement in our Parliament next Monday<sup>5</sup> explaining our standpoint and the gravity of the world situation and urge resort to negotiations in spirit of moderation and restraint.

I should like to impress upon you the absolute necessity of avoiding use of the atom bomb. This will make world war inevitable. You can judge yourself the consequence of this in Western Europe. In Asia there has been strong feeling that atom bomb is used against Asians. Whoever first employs this weapon of tremendous destruction will I am sure forfeit the sympathies of people in this part of the world.

Before concluding I will touch on what I know is for Americans an extremely difficult matter. I refer to MacArthur's command of U.N. forces. He is a good general but his political sagacity is, you will agree, not equal to the responsibilities that political forces in Korea call upon the Supreme Commander of U.N. forces. Cannot something be done to limit his authority?

Once more let me wish you Godspeed and success in your fateful mission.

5. See *post*, pp. 422-435.

## 9. Message to C.R. Attlee<sup>1</sup>

Many thanks for your message dated 1st December which Sir Archibald Nye has communicated to me this morning. I have already sent you a message of good wishes and a statement of our view regarding the Korean situation. You will see from this that we are fully conscious of the danger that confronts us.

I am in entire agreement with you that all our energies should be directed towards avoiding an extension of the present conflict. I have informed our Ambassador in Washington of your visit and she will be at your service whenever you require.<sup>2</sup>

1. New Delhi, 2 December 1950. Copy in V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

2. A copy of this message was sent to Vijayalakshmi Pandit with Nehru's note: "British Embassy would be able to inform you of Mr Attlee's programme in Washington. Attlee has expressed a wish to meet you and I have no doubt that you will see him and be available for consultation whenever required."



## 10. Cable to K.M. Panikkar<sup>1</sup>

We have sent you separately text of message from me to Attlee.<sup>2</sup> This will give you our general line of approach to present crisis. We feel strongly that every effort should be made to stop rot. How far it is possible for you to approach Chinese Government, it is for you to decide. I suggest your explaining to them our present views and our extreme desire for peace, and hope that they will also help in avoiding war.

1. New Delhi, 2 December 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. See *ante*, pp. 417-419.

## 11. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram No. 485 dated 3rd December.<sup>2</sup> Our instructions of 2nd December explained our general approach and specially covered debate in Security Council. Any initiative in General Assembly must depend upon result of Attlee-Truman discussions in Washington. Unless reasonable support is forthcoming to amendment or resolution we might move, no practical result will be achieved.

2. While we can understand American reactions to situation in Korea, we are firmly convinced that only right approach is towards negotiation. To condemn China at this stage and name her as aggressor will prevent all attempts at settlement and seriously endanger peace. We have received today a memorandum from Canadian Government in which they emphasise that doors should be left open until last possible moment for settlement with Chinese communists by negotiation and hence any decision by United Nations at this stage that China is an aggressor would be unwise.

1. New Delhi, 4 December 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Rau reported that under pressure of American public opinion concerned with the fate of a large number of U.S. forces trapped in Korea, the U.S. was likely to introduce in the General Assembly the six-Power resolution that the Soviet Union had vetoed in the Security Council. He asked for use of his discretion to move suitable amendments to provide for a ceasefire and a demilitarised zone, including safe withdrawal of all foreign troops to their respective sides of the zone.

3. As regards withdrawal of trapped troops, rapidly changing situation in Korea makes it difficult to lay down any formula. If ceasefire and negotiation are agreed to, this matter can be considered by Military Commanders as part of armistice. It would be unwise to encumber resolution with controversial and complicated matters.

4. Panikkar's appraisal of China's latest attitude<sup>3</sup> has been sent to Vijayalakshmi to be communicated to Attlee. Please obtain this from her.

3. Panikkar stated that just when China was considering Bevin's suggestion of a demilitarised zone and discussions in New York, MacArthur's offensive of 24 November made negotiations impossible, with China concluding that either Britain was being used "to throw dust in her eyes" or the U.S. was determined to force the issue. He added that China could not be expected to join discussions if termed an aggressor and the only possibility now was direct negotiations between the Powers on an equal basis in which her right to participate in decisions in all matters concerning the Pacific was unequivocally recognised.

## 12. Record of Talk with the U.S. Ambassador<sup>1</sup>

...Nehru maintained that he was exerting his full influence to prevent the debate from degenerating into a series of blame-casting speeches.<sup>2</sup> The situation was so grave that nothing could be gained at this late date by looking for scapegoats for mistakes of past. He could not of course be responsible for all that various debaters might say but he hoped for display of temperance and restraint.

Prime Minister said he was sorely troubled as to what could best be done to prevent the onrush of war. It was true that collective opposition to aggression seemed in the long run the most effective deterrent to war. But when house was on fire efforts for the moment must be concentrated on extinguishing the fire rather than on applying fire preventative methods. Fire was blazing in Korea. Problem was how to put it out. The United Nations, he regretted to say, did not seem to offer much hope in this respect in present circumstances.

1. New Delhi, 5 December 1950. The U.S. Ambassador, Loy W. Henderson's cable to Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, Volume VII, pp. 1418-1419. Extracts.
2. Henderson had expressed the hope that Nehru would use his influence to prevent the Congress MPs from concentrating on criticising the East Asia policy of the U.S. in the debate on the international situation due to take place in Parliament the next day.



He thought that the only hope was across the table talks between Powers most immediately concerned such as the U.S., the U.K., the U.S.S.R. and Communist China—the latter must be included because it was party to hostilities. First ceasefire, then talks on subjects which had become inextricably interrelated—Formosa, entry of Communist China into the U.N., and settlement of the Korean problem. Perhaps it was already too late for talks of this kind; perhaps war was inevitable and all that was left was for each Power to get in or keep out of war as gracefully as possible. If single Great Power should be convinced that war was inevitable and should base its actions on the conviction, war was of course inevitable. He had some concern lest Communist China had already decided that war was inevitable and therefore could not be deflected from its course.

Nehru said that he had sent some of his views regarding the situation to the U.S. through Attlee and direct to Madame Pandit. I told him that I was sure that his views which were always welcomed by my Government would be given careful consideration.

### 13. India's Policies<sup>1</sup>

I beg to move:

That the present international situation and the policy of the Government of India in relation thereto be taken into consideration.

I have always welcomed a debate on foreign affairs in this House. Foreign affairs are no longer merely the concern of a few experts and specialists. They concern now almost every person, and any event that happens in distant parts of the world may have consequences which large numbers of people in other parts of the world may have to bear. More especially they are the concern of this House on whom a very great responsibility rests in regard to both domestic and international affairs. So I welcome this opportunity of discussing this subject, especially because we are, as the House well knows, in the middle of a very grave crisis in the world.

Though I welcome it, I feel that at this moment more than at any other it is desirable for the fullest understanding to exist between the Government and

1. 6 December 1950. *Parliamentary Debates, Official Report*, 1950 Vol. VI, Part II, cols 1257-1271.



this House and the country which the House represents, so that we might have full cooperation and full support to any policy that we might undertake. So I welcome it. Nevertheless I wish to say that I feel a little hesitant on this occasion and am somewhat overwhelmed by a sense of responsibility. It is a little difficult to talk about these matters without, perhaps, saying things which might hurt someone, some people, some country, by saying things which may be truthful or which one may believe to be truthful. I am convinced that at this moment it will not only not serve any useful purpose but will actually do harm to our objectives, if we start blaming each other or try to fasten blame on this country or that, even though we may believe in that argument.

Therefore, I find some difficulty in speaking about this matter, because I wish to avoid saying any word which might hurt any country or any people. I feel that there has been quite enough of recrimination and of blaming countries and peoples, and often enough maybe that was justified, but in the state of affairs as they are today, instead of helping to ease the situation it might make it far worse. We have to deal with governments, but we have also to deal with mass psychology, with millions of people feeling one way or other, with passions inflamed and aroused. When that is the position, it does not help very much to talk loudly to each other in terms of blame and censure, because that does not enter the mind of the other party and it only inflames him still further. And the question arises whether we are trying to find a peaceful way out of a terrible difficulty, or whether we are only trying to justify the action that we may have taken. Anyway, so far as I am concerned, I do not think I have any particular right to blame anybody and I think that all of us, wherever we might be, in some measure more or less have to bear the responsibility for this terrible state of the world today.

So I shall endeavour not to say anything of that kind, and, if I may, with all respect, tell the House to remember that also and not to say words that hurt and words that merely add to the difficulties of the situation. I think it will then be easier for us to consider this question. What is required today, perhaps more than at any other time, is not the strife or fierce argument, either of the law court or elsewhere, but rather some charity of thought and the touch of healing. Unfortunately for all of us the great healer under whom we grew up is no more and that is a misfortune not only for us, but the world today.

The House is aware that when we talk today of international affairs, the issue may be described in just one sentence or two or three words. The issue is: peace or war. And not war in a particular corner of the world, but an overwhelming and all-enveloping war, which may well bring uttermost destruction to this world and which may well ruin the proud structure of our present-day civilisation. So it is a matter of the greatest import and consequence that we are discussing. I approach this subject in all earnestness and humility

and I wish to say frankly to this House that I have no easy remedy for this. All that we can do is to grope about in this dim twilight trying to seek some light and do something to prevent that dim twilight becoming dark night. Possibly we may succeed—it is difficult to say. But in any event it is our duty and the duty of everyone to try his utmost to prevent the horror of a third world war from descending upon us.

I am quite sure that people all over the world, in whatever country they might live, are anxious to avoid war and want peace. I am equally sure that every Government wants to avoid war. And yet, in spite of this universal desire for peace and for the avoidance of war, we drift towards that very thing that we seek to avoid. We are in the grip of fear and suspicion and each and every step that one party takes adds to the fear and suspicion of the other. And so, like the march of some Greek tragedy, we appear to go on to an inevitable catastrophe. I said inevitable; yet, I do not think it is inevitable if we try hard enough and if the peoples of the world and the governments of the world try hard enough, though it becomes increasingly difficult to do so.

Now, when we discuss foreign affairs there are many subjects that come up before us, subjects intimately concerned with our life here in this country. They include, let us say, one important subject of primary importance for us—our relations with Pakistan. I do not propose to say much, or indeed anything, on that subject in this particular debate, partly because we have often discussed it and I have often given you such information as I have. If and when any new development takes place, I shall certainly take the House into my confidence. Our relations with Pakistan are of extreme importance to us. Our relations with any neighbour country of ours, whatever it may be, are of extreme importance to us; that is obvious.

Then there is the question which has often agitated and rather excited the House—the question of foreign possessions in India. They are small areas of no very great importance territorially, or in the economic sense; nevertheless they raise big questions on which we have strong feelings. We have, I think, set, if I may say so, rather an extraordinary example of restraint in regard to these foreign possessions. For the last three years or more we have reasoned, we have argued and we have approached the matter peacefully without much result. We know, of course, that there can be only one ultimate result. We cannot conceive and we can never tolerate that any foreign footholds can remain in India. Nevertheless I do submit to the House that the way we have proceeded in regard to these foreign possessions shows not only our peaceful approach to such problems, but the enormous patience which we have shown.

Then there is the old question which was recently before the United Nations, the question of Indians in South Africa, which again has raised very vital issues not only for us, but for the whole world, if I may say so, because it raises the vital issue of racialism. We are intimately concerned with those



people of Indian origin who settled down in South Africa and who have become South African citizens. They being South African citizens we have nothing to do with them politically, although culturally we are connected, because they went from India. But because it involves these questions of racialism, because it involves not only the self-respect of India and the Indian people, but of every people in Asia, and for every people in the world, this has become a vital matter. Again you will observe the patience we have shown in this matter, how we have proceeded year after year arguing patiently, trying to make the other people understand, going to the United Nations, the United Nations passing resolutions and our trying to fulfil the directions of the U.N.O. Now another resolution has been passed.<sup>2</sup> As the resolutions go, we welcome this. What it will lead to I do not know. But again one thing is certain. Whether it takes a month or a year or more, we shall not submit to any racialism in any part of the world.

Now, I come to the main theme of my address, that is, the situation as it has arisen in the Far East. The House knows the history of it more or less—how there was an incursion from North Korea into South Korea. There was an invasion and this matter was brought up before the United Nations. It was described by the Security Council as an aggression over South Korea. We supported that decision and voted for it. Subsequently other developments took place. We could not support every step that was taken, for a variety of reasons which, I think, I have placed before the House from time to time. So I need not go into them.

But the basic fact that aggression had taken place of South Korea by North Korea seemed to us to be patent, and we supported it. And the policy which we laid down for us then, we have continued ever since. The question came up before the United Nations in various ways. There was what is called the six-Power Resolution and the seven-Power Resolution, and we could not support all these resolutions for a variety of reasons.

But before that the House will remember that, thinking hard as to whether we could perhaps be helpful in this situation which was ever growing more and more difficult, I had the temerity to address an appeal to Marshal Stalin on the one hand and Mr Acheson<sup>3</sup> on the other. That was no attempt at mediation. We have never thought in terms of mediation. But it was an appeal in the vague hope, in the faint hope, that perhaps it might lead to some

2. On 2 December 1950, the General Assembly passed a resolution calling upon India, Pakistan and South Africa to discuss at a round table conference the conditions of Asians in South Africa. It directed South Africa not to proceed with the implementation of the Group Areas Act, which provided for the separation of different ethnic groups and races, and suggested the setting up of a commission to hold negotiations if no decision was reached at the round table conference by 1 April 1951.
3. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 14 Part II, pp. 347-348 and 352-353.



positive result. In that appeal I had suggested various things, including that China might be brought into the United Nations and the U.S.S.R. might also return to the Security Council. Now, we had of course been in favour of China being taken into the United Nations, ever since we had recognized China—the People's Government of China. The fact of our recognition led inevitably to the conclusion that, so far as we were concerned, they should come to the United Nations. That was so. But in the context in which I suggested it then to Marshal Stalin and Mr Acheson, it had become a rather urgent and immediate issue, quite apart from the rights and wrongs of the matter, because we thought that this situation in the Far East could only be dealt with satisfactorily if the principal parties concerned were also round the conference table.

The United Nations is a great and powerful organisation, and it has got a Charter which lays down, I think in very impressive language which can hardly be bettered, its ideals and objectives. But the United Nations was founded with the intention of the great nations as well as the small meeting together and finding a way of cooperative effort. We felt that in this crisis in Korea it was very necessary that these approaches should be made with the representatives of those great countries most concerned being able to meet together in the United Nations as well as outside. Otherwise, there was the danger that the position might worsen, as indeed it has done. So it was with that objective that I had made that appeal to Russia and to the United States of America. Unfortunately that did not lead to any fruitful results.

Subsequently developments took place in the fortunes of war and the aggression by North Korea was checked and pushed back and it appeared that the North Korean armies had been broken up completely and the forces of the United Nations seemed to be completely victorious, as they indeed were. The question arose then as to what should be done, whether they should go on, and how far they should go. At that time we were in intimate touch with our Ambassador in Peking, and we asked him, as we asked our representatives in other countries, to tell us how the various governments were viewing the scene. We had perhaps a rather special responsibility in regard to China, because we were one of the very few countries represented there, and, we were the only country, apart from the countries of the Soviet group, which could find out through its Ambassador what the reactions of the Chinese Government were to the developing events. Our Ambassador sent us full reports containing the views of the Chinese Government, not his views; he merely told us how the Chinese Government felt about it. Because we were anxious that the other countries with whom we were cooperating should know about these views, we sent them on to the United Kingdom and the United States Governments.

Now, these views indicated that if the 38th parallel was crossed the Chinese Government, rightly or wrongly is not the point, would consider it as a grave danger to their own security and that they would not tolerate it. Well,

nevertheless, a decision was taken for the United Nations forces to advance beyond that. They did advance beyond that, and at some later stage they came into conflict with reorganized North Korean troops and later with the forces from China. The Chinese Government described them as volunteers, but other information said that they were regular Chinese troops. The distinction is not very important; it has little bearing because there can be little doubt that large forces—call them volunteers, call them what you like—came across the Manchurian border into North Korea and threatened the U.N. troops to this extent that these latter forces are in grave danger at the moment, and they did withdraw and are withdrawing.

Now that is the position. It would not do us much good to think of what might have been done and of the errors or mistakes committed either in the political or in any other field. And now we have to face a situation which is so rapidly changing that it is very difficult for any person even to suggest from a distance what should be done. It is conceivable that if I had spoken in this House four, five or six days ago I might have put forward some suggestions. I find today that the suggestions I had in mind four, five or six days ago are out of date. They do not fit in with the circumstances. Something else has to be thought of. We did, as a matter of fact, convey our views to some other governments, because we are in constant touch with the Governments of the United Kingdom and the United States of America as well as some governments in Asia. We have been putting forward what we thought might be the approach. Some of these governments are good enough to tell us what they propose to do or what they have in their minds but the situation changes so rapidly, and every step that we may envisage today becomes obsolete and impracticable of being given effect to the next day.

The general approach that we made to this problem, that is, in the course of the last ten days or so, since the situation became so bad, was first of all that it will serve little purpose, and indeed it would be very harmful, if this matter was considered in the United Nations in a formal way, of passing resolutions of condemnation of each other. The House will remember that one of the first things that was suggested by the Chinese delegation there was a resolution of condemnation of the United Nations itself or of the U.S.A. On the other hand resolutions condemning China and calling her an aggressor, etc., have also been suggested repeatedly.

Well, quite apart from the rights and wrongs of it, the point is that when you are on the verge of world war, it seems obvious to me that it does not help in the slightest people calling each other names there. Unless you want a war to come sooner rather than later, unless one wants merely to have a background of political justification for an action to be taken in the military field, that may be right; but if we seek to avoid war, then that kind of approach becomes harmful. The only possible approach could be one of an attempt at



negotiation. That negotiation may fail but there is no other way. The other course is war. So we felt that an attempt should be made at negotiation between the Great Powers, between the Powers most concerned with this matter. It was clear that no negotiation would have any particular value unless China was associated with it, because China, apart from being a Great Power in the real sense of the word, was most intimately concerned with the events happening next door to her. Indeed, the whole difficulty has arisen because things have also happened elsewhere. So we suggested negotiations. We suggested then that there should be a ceasefire and, if possible, some kind of demilitarized zone, which was a natural consequence to this ceasefire, and then negotiations among the parties most concerned, including China, negotiations not merely about what should follow the ceasefire but rather about the whole question of Korea.

It also had seemed necessary and essential to us, if not at this stage but at some later stage, that those negotiations should include the question of Formosa. Otherwise all these danger spots would remain. Now, one can hardly have negotiations or go far enough without the fighting stopping. Therefore, a ceasefire appeared desirable, and whether it is possible or not is another matter now. It may be possible some time or other. Anyhow what we thought of a ceasefire does not appear to be possible at the present moment and some other type of ceasefire might perhaps be possible.

That is what we had in mind and we welcomed it when the Prime Minister of England decided to go to the United States to meet President Truman. We welcomed that decision and wished him Godspeed in his endeavours to prevent war and find some way out of this tangle—some way of peace. We found that generally speaking there was a good deal in common between the Prime Minister of England and us, going by what he had said in regard to the present situation. So we gave him our own viewpoint fully, so that he may be acquainted with it in his discussions with President Truman and we informed also other friendly Governments about it, in Asia as well as elsewhere.

Now, during the last few months a great deal has happened in Korea. We talk about Korea and say that there must be unanimity. Every side talks about freedom in Korea, about the unity and independence of Korea. The United Nations stands for that. The forces that are fighting the United Nations more or less say the same thing, but the result of this unanimity of approach, if I may say so, is this: that Korea is a dying country. It is dying and desolate. Only this morning I had a letter from Seoul, the capital city of Korea, from a Korean lady who has gone through all kinds of horrors which happened during these many months; and there is a phrase in it: "My country is sick and dying of cold, disease and starvation."

It is a strange thing that we seek to find remedies to help our friends in ways which kill or destroy them. It is a strange commentary on the way of



violence which all of us, all countries including our own country, somehow are forced to adopt in the present world; and that commentary will be complete when the third world war comes and we all sink into ruin and oblivion. So it is about time that we thought in some other directions. I wish we did not get lost in our passion and anger at the critical time but looked perhaps to our own actions and in a way learn the old lesson that a wrong doing cannot be cured by another wrong doing nor can violence be ultimately conquered by violence. It is difficult, of course, and it is easy to talk piously in platitudes like this.

But there is something more which is the bitter truth that we have to understand and realize today. In this fighting that has taken place in Korea the main burden on the part of the United Nations has fallen on the forces of the United States. They have suffered greatly and at the present moment they are suffering greatly and, I think, our sympathy should go out to them in this present predicament. We have, as I have pointed out, taken a certain attitude about the aggression of North Korea, and although we did not wholly support the various other resolutions of the United Nations or the Security Council, that basic attitude has remained the same. We did not support some of those other resolutions—the six-Power or seven-Power resolutions—because we felt that they would not help in the solution of the problem; because we felt that they would only increase the tension and the passion of each State and that it was not the way to find a solution. Therefore, also, we did not join the seven-Power Commission<sup>4</sup> that was set up by one of these resolutions. Not that we wished to shirk our responsibility or duty; but we felt that duty and responsibility could only be discharged adequately if the approach or mood, if I may say so, was somewhat different from the one merely of condemnation.

That has been our attitude. I wish you to remember also that whatever happens in Korea is of the utmost significance to the Chinese people. One cannot ignore that fact, unless one is prepared to ignore completely China and the Chinese people, which also one cannot do because they are more than a mere handful. So our approach has always been that this problem of Korea can only be solved in cooperation with the Chinese or, if you like, at least with their acquiescence. Whatever the military result might be, however the United Nations forces might succeed in the military sense, the problem would not have been solved without the acquiescence of China ultimately. So right from the beginning we laid stress on this. That was the reason why we felt, apart from other reasons, that China should be represented in the United Nations. But this became an urgency.

Now, again, the military situation has undergone a considerable change and I just cannot make a profitable suggestion as to what should be done here and now. I can only hope that the conversations that are taking place between

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President Truman and Prime Minister Attlee will bear fruit and will lead to some peaceful way out of this situation. But whatever that might be, I cannot conceive again of any peaceful solution in the Far East—if I may say so, even if there is war, any solution after the war—which does not take fully into consideration this great country of China in regard to those problems. Therefore, all I can suggest is that we should try to find some way for peaceful negotiation and consideration of these problems of Korea and Formosa, for Formosa also has to come into the picture, not together, but a little later, by the Great Powers, including China.

I said Formosa. Formosa is not what might be called an immediate issue in the sense that it must be settled immediately. Formosa is also tied up with these other problems; and that question has also to be considered. You will remember that on Formosa some of the Great Powers made declarations in some peaceful way out of this situation. But whatever that might be, I cannot conceive again of any peaceful solution in the Far East—if I may say so, even if there is war, any solution after the war—which does not take fully into consideration this great country of China in regard to those problems. Therefore, all I can suggest is that we should try to find some way for peaceful negotiation and consideration of these problems of Korea and Formosa, for Formosa also has to come into the picture, not together, but a little later, by the Great Powers, including China.

I said Formosa. Formosa is not what might be called an immediate issue in the sense that it must be settled immediately. Formosa is also tied up with these other problems; and that question has also to be considered. You will remember that on Formosa some of the Great Powers made declarations in Cairo and Potsdam, and later President Truman made a very forthright declaration earlier in this year, I think. I feel that it is only on the general basis of these declarations that we can proceed. How to proceed, in what manner, is something for careful consideration.

One thing more I would like to say. There has been a good deal of talk about the atomic bomb. Well, it is not necessary for me in this House to say much about it, because I am sure there is no one in this House who at all likes the idea of the use of the atomic bomb, anywhere, at any time. More particularly in this particular context of the war in the Far East. Perhaps you might have seen in this morning's newspapers a statement made by Mr Pearson, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Canada. That statement speaks particularly about the use of the atomic bomb.<sup>5</sup> I cannot say anything more forceful than what Mr Pearson has said in this matter. He has pointed out the grave dangers, more particularly of the use of it in Asia, and the reaction to it in Asia and the world. Because the atomic bomb, apart from the inherent horrors that it has with it, and the destruction that it might cause, it has become a symbol to the world of incarnate evil. If the force of circumstances compel us, compel the world to use it, it means that the world has surrendered to evil completely. Therefore, I earnestly hope that there will be no question now or hereafter of the use of the atomic bomb.

I should like to say a few words about two other neighbouring countries, Tibet and Nepal. Some time ago, I made a statement in this House in



information,<sup>6</sup> nor can I give that information now. The story of Tibet so far as we are concerned in this matter is very simple. I am not going into past history. Ever since the People's Government of China talked about Tibet and about the liberation of Tibet, our Ambassador, acting on our behalf, told them how we felt about it. We told them that we earnestly hoped that this matter would be settled peacefully by China and Tibet. We told them that we had no territorial or political ambitions in regard to Tibet, that we had trade and cultural relations which naturally we would like to preserve—and they came in the way of nobody, neither Tibet nor China—that we were interested in Tibet maintaining her autonomy which she had had for the last forty or fifty years at least. We did not challenge or deny the suzerainty of China over Tibet.

But we did lay considerable stress on the autonomy of Tibet. So we pointed out all these in a friendly way to the Chinese Government and in their replies they always said that they would very much like to settle this peacefully but that in any event they were going to liberate Tibet. It is not quite clear from whom they were going to liberate it. However, their replies made us to understand that a peaceful solution would be found, though I must say that they gave no assurance or guarantee about it to us. They always put the two together: "We are prepared for a peaceful solution; but anyhow we are going to liberate." So that when we heard about their armies marching into Tibet, it did come as a surprise to us and a shock.

We had come to believe that the matter will be settled by peaceful negotiations. And, indeed, one can hardly talk about war between China and Tibet. Tibet is not in a position to carry on a war. There is no threat from Tibet to China, obviously. They say, there might be foreign intrigues in Tibet; I do not know. Anyhow, there was no immediate threat. Violence might perhaps be justified in the modern world; but naturally one should not indulge in violence unless there is no other way. Well, there was a way in Tibet as we had pointed out. So it was a surprise.

The House knows and has seen the correspondence that was exchanged between the Chinese Government and our Government.<sup>7</sup> Even so, we have gone on pressing them that it would be desirable to halt their advance and settle the matter peacefully with Tibetan representatives. As a matter of fact, there can be no doubt that for the last several weeks the main advance has been halted. But I cannot definitely say what they intend doing or whether

6. In reply to a question whether the Chinese army was still on the march towards Lhasa, Nehru replied that there had been no change since his statement in Parliament on 15 November that the Chinese troops had crossed into Tibet on 7 October 1950. He added, "It is rather difficult to have precise information, but, generally speaking, our information leads us to think that there has been no marked advance of the major forces."

7. See *ante*, Section 11.



some small groups have not gone in various directions or advanced in various directions. So far as we know, there has been no advance towards Lhasa and conditions in Lhasa at present are still normal. That, of course, does not solve the problem. All I can say is that I earnestly hope that even now the Government of China will try to settle the matter peacefully.

Now, coming to Nepal. The last fortnight—or is it a little more?—there have been strange developments in this country.<sup>8</sup> Ever since I have been associated with this Government, I have taken a great deal of interest in Nepal. We have desired not only to continue our old friendship with that country but to put it, if I may say so, on a firmer basis. We have been inheritors of many good things from the days of British rule, and many bad things also; and our relations with our neighbouring countries grew up sometimes in an expansive phase of British policy, of British imperialism. And so they developed a kind of mixed relationship. Now, Nepal in the old days, that is to say, the British days of India, was an independent country, called so. But strictly speaking, it was not very independent, except internally. The test of the independence of a country is, normally speaking, that it has relationships with other countries. Nepal was completely autonomous and independent internally. But her foreign relations were strictly limited to its relations with the Government of India, that is to say, the British Government functioning in India. That was a very limited outlook or approach to international relations.

Now, when we came into the picture, we assured Nepal that we would not only respect her independence, but we wanted to see Nepal develop into a strong and progressive country. We went further in this respect than the British Government had done; that is to say, Nepal began to develop other foreign relations. We welcomed it. We did not come in the way, although that was something far in addition to what had been the position in British times. Naturally, and quite frankly, we do not like, and we do not propose to like, any foreign interference in Nepal. We recognise Nepal as an independent country. We wish it well. But any child knows that you cannot go to Nepal without passing through India. So our relationship is intimate and no other country's relationship with Nepal can be as intimate, and every other country must have to realise and appreciate this intimate geographical, cultural and other relationship of India and Nepal. There is no way out except by realising this fact.

So three years ago or more, we assured Nepal of our desire that Nepal should be a strong country and an independent country; and we always added, a progressive country. We added that because in the nature of things, we stood not only for progressive democracy in our own country, but round about also. We talk about it not only in Nepal but also in distant quarters of the

8. See *ante*, Section 12.

world, and we are not going to forget it when our neighbouring countries, when a country on our doorsteps was concerned. But our advice was friendly and was given in as friendly a way as possible. We pointed out that while the world was changing, rather rapidly, if Nepal did not make some effort to keep pace to go in that direction, there may be some pushing about later. But it was rather a difficult thing for us, because we did not wish to interfere in Nepal in any way.

We wished to treat Nepal as an independent country and, at the same time, we saw that unless something was done in the internal sphere there, difficulties might arise. This process was going on and the advice we gave in all friendship did not produce much result. Then, in the last fortnight, or it may be three weeks, these sudden developments have taken place there. And now our interest in the internal conditions of Nepal became still more acute and personal, if I may say so, because of the developments across our borders, because of the developments in China and Tibet, to be frank. And regardless of our feelings about Nepal, we were interested in our own country's security, in our own country's borders. Now, we have had from immemorial times a magnificent frontier, that is to say, the Himalayas. It is not quite so difficult as it used to be, still it is difficult, very difficult. Now, so far as the Himalayas are concerned, they lie on the other side of Nepal, mostly, not on this side. Therefore the principal barrier to India lies on the other side of Nepal and we are not going to tolerate any person coming over that barrier. Therefore, much as we appreciate the independence of Nepal, we cannot risk our own security from anything going wrong in Nepal which permits either that barrier to be crossed or otherwise weakens our frontier. So that recent developments made us think even more furiously about this Nepal situation than previously we had done. Previously we had gone on in our own patient way, advising in a friendly way, pointing out the difficulties, pointing out what should be done and what should not be done, but with no great result.

Now the present position has arisen and, as the House knows, the King of Nepal is at the present moment in Delhi. Also two Ministers or members of the Nepalese Government are in Delhi at present and we have been having certain talks with them. Those talks have thus far yielded no result. And may I in this connection warn this House not to rely too much on all sorts of statements that appear in the newspapers. They have seldom any basis, in fact, nowadays.

Again we pointed out to the present Government of Nepal and to the Ministers who have come here that we desire above all a strong and progressive, independent Nepal. In fact, if I may put it in order of priority, our chief need—not only our need but also the world's need—is peace and stability in Nepal at present. But having said that, I should also like to add that we are convinced that there can be no peace or stability in Nepal



by going back to the old order completely. That is a matter of judgment, not of desire. Probably any Member who has any knowledge of the situation can realise it himself that there can be no going back exactly to the old order.

We are anxious, as I said, to have peace and stability there. Therefore, we have tried, insofar as our advice is of any worth, to advise in a way so as to prevent any major upset there. We have tried to find a way, a middle way, if you like, which ensures the progress of Nepal, the introduction of or some advance in the ways of democracy in Nepal and, at the same time, a way which does not uproot the old completely. We want some way like that. Whether it is possible or not I do not know. We have suggested these things and that is the position in regard to Nepal.

One thing more and that is in regard to the King of Nepal. There has been a good deal also of talk and reference in the newspapers about the recognition of this King or that King. The fact of the matter is that the moment we came as Government, as soon as our Ambassador went there, we—in common with other countries associated with Nepal—our Ambassador naturally went to the King, although the House will remember that the Constitution of Nepal—I use a strange phrase ‘Constitution of Nepal’, for Nepal has no Constitution—nevertheless the practice that has governed Nepal during the last nearly one hundred years or so has been the practice in which the King has no say. Nevertheless, because of international conventions our Ambassador had to go to the King as the head of the State; and so did other Ambassadors. So, somehow or other, because of these factors and because of Nepal coming into contact in the diplomatic field with some other nations, a slight difference came in with regard to the position of the King in relation to other nations, regardless of the internal situation. To say that we recognise the King and he was considered the head of the State: we recognise the King that way, if you like.

We continue to recognise the King and we have no reason why we should do anything else and we propose to continue doing so. So this question in the way or shape in which it has arisen does not arise at all so far as we are concerned.

We are a patient Government, perhaps too patient occasionally; and we are trying hard to find a way out by friendly talk, by friendly counsel, and we shall continue to do so. But I do feel that if this matter goes on being dragged along without some way out being found in the near future, it will not be good for Nepal and it might possibly become a little more difficult to find that middle way which we have been advising and advocating all this time.

We speak of foreign affairs in this country and we give our advice, for what it is worth, sometimes to other countries. But the fact remains that such value as our advice or views might have has, if you like, a moral value, a



psychological value. But the fate of the world depends far more today on some of the Great Powers, on what they do and what they do not do—on the U.S.A., on the United Kingdom, on the Soviet Union and on China. Perhaps the fate of the world depends more on them than on all the others put together at the present moment. And I would on my behalf—I am sure the House will join with me—make an earnest appeal to these great countries to make every effort to solve the present tangle by a peaceful approach, by negotiation or any other way they could find, provided it is peaceful; because the consequences of not doing so are very terrible to contemplate. The tragedy of it is, as I said, that people in every country desire peace. I have no doubt about it. I would say that Governments also desire peace. But some evil fate seems to be pursuing humanity at the present moment and driving it more and more in a direction which can only end in stark ruin. So I hope that these great countries will apply themselves to securing peace and I can assure them and pledge my Government and, if I may say so, this House, that we shall do every thing in our power to promote peace and to avoid war.

#### 14. Cable to K.M. Panikkar<sup>1</sup>

The thirteen-Power appeal asking North Korea and China to declare that their forces will not cross the 38th parallel<sup>2</sup> was result of discussion at Lake Success among sponsors and was not referred to us before it was issued. Now that it has been made we should try to make the best of it and you might consider supporting it informally to Peking Government. Truman and Attlee (for your own information) regard the appeal as a helpful development. If Chinese reject it or disregard it they will definitely put themselves in the wrong with many Asian nations also.

1. New Delhi, 7 December 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. The appeal by Afghanistan, Burma, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Yemen on 5 December stated that such a declaration would give time for considering further steps to resolve the conflict in East Asia and thus help to avert the danger of a world war.

## 15. Preventing the Drift to Disaster<sup>1</sup>

Sir, this two days' debate has ended in a somewhat unusual manner and for the moment such thoughts as I had collected in my head have been rather dispersed. I have listened with great attention to what honourable Members have said during these two days, and I am thankful to some of them who had words of commendation for me, and am still more thankful to those who had words of criticism for me for the policy we have pursued. The debate has ranged over many subjects and the expression of opinion has varied greatly. As the House will see there was at one end Mr M.R. Masani, at the other end Mr Brajeshwar Prasad<sup>2</sup> and between those two extremes other honourable Members wander about.<sup>3</sup>

I do not quite know whether I should deal with the large number of points that have been raised. I think perhaps it will be better if I chose some of the most important of those points and dealt with them. We have been discussing matters of grave import and though one likes hilarity occasionally, sometimes it does not fit in with the subject. The subject for our discussion has been one of the highest importance and over this subject has hovered all this time tragedy and possibly catastrophe. As I sat listening to the speeches of honourable Members, various pictures floated before my mind; pictures of the Korean battle-fields and armies marching to and fro and people dying; a picture of possibly some room in Washington where two statesmen, leaders of their nations, holding earnest converse together to find some way out of these present difficulties; and other pictures. Because there is hardly a person concerned with the foreign affairs of a nation who is today not carrying a heavy burden, not trying to grope—I repeat the word grope—in the dense darkness which surrounds us. Some honourable Members are full of light—they have no need to grope. They know exactly what should be done at any moment. I envy them for this feeling of brightness and lightness.

1. Reply to the debate in Parliament on the international situation, 7 December 1950. *Parliamentary Debates, Official Report*, 1950, Vol. VI, Part II, cols 1370-1385.
2. (b. 1911); suffered imprisonment for participating in Congress movements, 1941 and 1942-44; Member, Constituent Assembly, 1946-49; Member, Provisional Parliament, 1950-52, and Lok Sabha, 1952-57.
3. While M.R. Masani advocated unstinted support to the U.N. and its decisions, cautioned against Chinese designs on India and favoured accepting food and economic assistance from Western countries, Brajeshwar Prasad held that India should walk out of the U.N. and ally herself with China and U.S.S.R. for her economic prosperity, Asia's progress and establishment of world peace.



Mr M.R. Masani said in the course of his speech that it will be a great tragedy if Mr Truman and Mr Attlee decided to appease China. It is a pity Mr Masani is not in the White House at Washington to advise them.

Many honourable Members have referred to our policy being unrealistic. The realism and the lack of realism have been referred to repeatedly and there has been often mention of sitting on the fence, not knowing what one does or what one should do, of doubt and uncertainty and so on and so forth. It seemed to me that those people who pride themselves on being practical politicians normally know nothing about realism or about the state of affairs that they have to meet or the questions they have to answer. It is an easy thing to say that this policy is not realistic. It is also easy to say that there is uncertainty, the policy is changed, etc. It is not for me, of course, to talk much on the policy of our Government with which I have been associated. That policy, inevitably, has to deal with world affairs and if any honourable Member thinks that the Government of India moulds world affairs, then he is very much mistaken. The Government of India's part in affecting world affairs is very, very little. Let us realise it. I do not say that we cannot affect them. I do not say that we have not affected them or influenced them to some extent. But, obviously, the measure that we affect them or influence them is a very little measure. Our policy is a very small part of various policies that mould world affairs. If the world goes wrong, then it may be, of course, that it is due to some error of ours, but surely it is the resultant of a large number of policies of various countries, and in particular of the great countries who, because of their power and influence, mould that policy much more than the smaller or the weaker countries. Some honourable Members seem to think that because various policies in the world have failed, our policy has been wrong. I have little to say to that, except that I would beg of them to look through the history of the past five years, let us say, since the last World War ended and see the record—sometimes of success, more often of failure—of the policies that have been pursued by various countries. We have had little to do with those policies. Sometimes, at the best, we have expressed an opinion. Sometimes, we have, if you like, played a passive role. Sometimes a small active role. Therefore, it is in this context that you have to judge a policy, a context in which we cannot do very much. Sometimes, a moment comes when even that small thing that we might do might make a great difference, and if we do not do it, we fail.

Now, I should like, before I deal with the wider questions, to deal with two or three specific matters that were raised. Many honourable Members referred to the question of defence. They were anxious that we should not weaken our defence, indeed they talked of rearmament, and increasing the strength of our Army, our Navy and our Air Force. They were afraid that we might weaken them. The honourable Pandit Kunzru referred to a question and



an answer to that question which I had given.<sup>4</sup> Well, of course, that question and answer—and specially the answer—necessarily had to be very brief. I could not deal with the subject in the course of a brief answer, especially when that question was a supplementary question, and I am afraid I could hardly deal with this big question of defence in the present debate. Nevertheless I should like to say something about it, and the first thing is this, that no Government in this country can possibly think lightly over the question of defence or think of weakening it at any time. Every Government must give first priority to the defence of the country. That is so. Now, what is defence? Most people seem to imagine that defence consists merely in large numbers of people marching up and down with guns. It is true that defence consists of armed men and machines. It is also true that defence does not consist of them only but of many other things.

Defence consists—if you want the equation for defence—of the defence forces, of the industrial potential of a country, of the morale of a country and any number of other things, such as the economic position of the country, etc. Now, you have to balance those things, and you have to balance them on the one side with the capacity of the country—resources of the country—and you cannot upset that equation very much. You cannot go beyond the capacity, beyond the resources of a country in any programme that you may make, whatever the danger may be. There is one thing which can go up, and that is your morale, and that is your determination not to surrender, whatever the danger, whatever happens. If that is present, then nothing can conquer you. But if you rely too much—if I may use the word in a different sense—Mr Masani referred to the Maginot line and talked of the Himalayas.<sup>5</sup> But if you rely on the Maginot line, on men with guns, and lose your moral fibre, then you are done for.

Therefore, when you talk of defence, remember your resources; remember your capacity; and remember that defence consists of the economic position of a country, of the industrial potential of the country, plus the defence forces. You may, of course, change the equation here and there. You may apply some more here, and apply a little less there. That is always possible, but you have to work within those limitations. An army or any other defence force which cannot provide its own equipment, more or less, is not an independent

4. H.N. Kunzru referred to a question by him in Parliament on 17 November as to whether the Government had decided to reduce the army and Nehru's "somewhat aggressive reply" that it was intended to have a smaller though more efficient army. He wondered whether military considerations permitted any reduction in the army.
5. Pointing out the need to "guard our frontiers ideologically and militarily to the best of our abilities", Masani said that it was dangerous to depend on the Himalayas for security in view of modernization in warfare, and gave the example of the Maginot Line which had crumbled against sophisticated German attack during the Second World War.

army. It depends on others. There is no harm in its depending so, except when crisis comes when you cannot get those things.

In other words, the real development and strength of an army and a country lie in developing the industrial resources and the economy of the country out of which armies and defence forces and everything come. Otherwise, it is just a superficial thing, which you may carry on by borrowing money or by any way you like for a little while without any basic strength. In the modern context of the world, wars may go on and on and you cannot expect too much help in regard to equipment or anything else from outside, and unless you have that economic basis, you cannot go very far even in your defence apparatus. Therefore, we have to consider all the time how to balance these things. Therefore, at the present moment of financial stringency, we have more specially to consider whether it is worth while having ten thousand or twenty thousand odd men with guns or something much more efficient to help us in our defence.

These are the factors, but the fact that we should give the topmost priority to defence is obvious. Do you think that any Government dare take chances with that? But I would beg of such honourable Members as talk of defence so much and of peril to country to consider it in another context and that is this. If there is peril to this country, if there is danger to this country and if there is urgency—and there is urgency about our problems; there are many of our problems which are terribly urgent; take our food problem, that is terribly urgent. So if there is all that, how will you fight, I ask you, with the best army in the world, if you cannot feed your army, if you cannot feed your people?

Again, defence becomes a food problem. It is not a question of guns. The first thing about defence is that people are fed. Hungry people do not fight. A hungry army cannot fight. Hungry people are bad economic material behind an army. Are you going to fight on the home front or on the external front? Therefore, the food problem comes first of all, even when you think of defence. Therefore, the problem of industrial development and growth becomes equally important so as to build up the resources whereby we can have defence. It is all tied up together. You cannot take one item singly and separately and say, 'Concentrate on defence'. Then everything else goes. Defence also goes, because the foundation for defence goes.

Now, I have referred to food, and I have referred to other things. The food problem has been discussed often enough in this House—and the sugar problem and the controls and so on—and there has been a great deal of excitement when these subjects have been discussed. But the House will forgive me if I say that neither in this House nor in the country do I sense a feeling of utter urgency about these problems that ought to exist. We talk about controls, and if there is a little lack of sugar, there is shouting all over the



country, because there is not enough sugar. And then you talk to me about defence. Well, a country which cannot put up with a few controls, a country which cannot do without a little sugar, how is that country going to face the enemy at a critical moment, I should like to know. Therefore, I beg this House and the country to remember that we do live in India in times of grave crisis and in times of grave crisis people have to give up everything that they hold dear—their families, their children and everything.

If you cannot give up your sugar, your wheat, your rice for a while, then no number of soldiers will be able to protect you, the Himalayas will not protect you and nothing will protect you, because there is an inner strength which you lack. Of course, we have to keep an army—we have to keep the best army. It is no good keeping a second-rate army, it is no good keeping a weak army. Whatever we have must be first rate. We have to balance it with all these other factors, whether it is feeding the people, or keeping up the economic position of the country, the industrial growth of the country and all that. We have to balance them and try to advance as rapidly as we can. That depends ultimately not on government decrees. It may depend on government law to some extent. Ultimately these matters depend on how the public and the House look upon these questions, how much they support the various policies, whatever they may be.

Take our food policy. It is a war policy—if you like—forget peace. We have used the term 'war' in another context. But I say from the point of view of today's war situation in the world, food is the most urgent and important thing today in this country. Therefore, it becomes a part of our war policy. To do it, to save it, not to waste it, to grow it, to keep it, all these various steps we have to take in regard to it.

So it is in this larger context that we have to see these problems. Obviously, in this country we have somewhat grown shy or, shall I say, lax in our thought and in our deed during the last few years, having achieved independence. But I do not think we have lost that moral fibre that brought us independence. And do you think that if any danger or peril comes to this country, we are going to weaken or surrender or bend down before it? Has that been our habit during the past generation when we struggled for freedom? Even if we do not have a single gun, we will fight and fight to the death. We are not going to surrender to any enemy that comes, any aggressor that comes from the mountains, or the seas or from elsewhere.

Now, that is so. But I do not wish to indulge in tall talk, because all this kind of thing does become tall talk. And we have to be careful, we have to plan and think and we have to realise the difficulties of the situation. But the fact remains that we live in dangerous times and we have to think, therefore, in terms of those times and dangers that surround us and that surround the world. And listening to some of the speeches, I felt some of the honourable



Members talked, what I consider, in a most unrealistic fashion. They went on talking about two blocs and one bloc—whether there are two blocs or whether there is only one bloc. Mr Masani felt that there is only one bloc. Well, there is only one bloc. The matter ends there; the question of our joining one or the other does not arise.

But, if I may respectfully remind the House, these questions and these arguments are completely out-of-date. They do not count today. The world marches rapidly and changes, new situations come and we have to deal with each situation as it comes. And today if a person thinks in this manner, it merely means that he is yesterday's man, he is last year's person and that he is not keeping pace with the changing world and changing events.

Today we have to deal with questions as they arise from time to time, day to day, hour to hour and in foreign policy, especially, one has to decide every hour almost what one has to do. Here is a danger facing the world. Why did we have this debate in this House? Because new situations had arisen; new dangers threaten the world and we wanted the counsel of the House as to what we should do and we wanted to tell them what policy, generally speaking, we are pursuing. It does not help much if the kind of speeches delivered last session or last year are repeated when the situation is completely changed. It does not help at all. And my fear is that, somehow or other, we in this country do not keep pace with events. We read about them in the newspapers, but we have got into grooves of thought and we cannot get out of those grooves in this changing world. It is no good your telling me that you dislike this country or that country—that you dislike Russia or you dislike China, or that you dislike the United States of America or the United Kingdom. I do not mind your likes or dislikes. But I have to deal with a situation and the House has got to deal with a situation and facts are facts and do not disappear on account of your likes or dislikes.

Military changes have taken place in Korea. All kinds of things are happening—dangerous things. Do you think you are going to meet that situation by expressing your strong dislike of that change or something else? You will not. Suppose you were responsible there? What will you do—deliver a speech, telling them what you like and dislike, and which bloc you belong to? That will not help the situation in the slightest.

So it is in this spirit of realism that I want you to approach this question—what has got to be done today; what has got to be done tomorrow. It is in the spirit of realism, I am sure, that President Truman and Mr Attlee are meeting in Washington and conversing together, because they have to deal with a positive situation, they have to issue orders, they have to decide what to do and what not to do—not vague theoretical things and idealistic or, if you like, moral approaches to the problem.

I hope such connection as I have with the foreign policy of India is not immoral. Nevertheless I want no moralism about this especially. There is far too much moralism and people think that because they use a few moral words or slogans they have discharged their duty. We should apply our good sense as much as possible. We should, of course, apply our idealism. What is idealism—may I ask? Is idealism something in the air with nothing to catch hold of? Idealism is the realism of tomorrow. It is the capacity to think in a slightly longer term—to think what is good for tomorrow, or for the day after tomorrow, or for the next year—and fashion yourself accordingly. The practical person, the realist, looks at the tip of his nose and does not see much further; the result is that he is all the time stumbling.

Now, I should like this House, or individual Members of this House, whenever they have some leisure at their disposal, to think of the last five or six years of diplomatic history of this world—of what has been done, what has been achieved and what has not been achieved. It is an astonishing period of history, where there has been repeated failure in spite of the best of intentions—not our failure, other peoples' failure. And the astonishing thing is that failure comes again and again and no lesson is learnt from that failure and the identical policy is pursued yet again. It is an extraordinary thing. I should have thought that the lesson of the two great World Wars—the first World War and the second World War—was obvious enough to any man, to any person who would give thought to it. Nevertheless it was not so obvious and more or less the same path is followed.

But leave the last two wars out. Take the last five years since the war ended. Again more or less the same thing is done. Now it may be that it is one particular country's fault, or group of nations' fault, it may be Russia's fault, it may be the communist group of nations' fault. Admitted, for a moment. What then? Suppose a group of nations is functioning in a way which is objectionable. How do we meet that?—That is the problem which is before us. It is no good looking at it in a way which defeats our own purpose.

People talk a great deal about communism and, as an honourable Member said, some Members thought that we were having a discussion about communism, or that this House had suddenly become an anti-communist conference or congress. Well, it is an interesting subject and we can discuss it sometime or other either in this House or outside. But it has not much bearing on the issue. And I say those persons here or elsewhere who think of world problems today as just revolving round the word communism or anti-communism are going hopelessly astray and they will never reach any objective or any goal. And the difficulty is that much of the thinking—not here but elsewhere—is revolving round that word.

The House knows very well what the policy of the Government of India has been in regard to communist activities in this country. It has



not been a tender policy, and it is not going to be a tender policy. So it is not a question of holding any particular opinion about that policy. It is a question of looking at the world as it is, looking at great forces at work, mighty forces moving millions and millions of men, trying to understand them, trying, as far as we can, to divert them into right channels and to prevent them going into wrong directions. That is the problem. Do you mean to tell me that I should go and tell China? Honourable Members seem to think that I should issue an ultimatum to China or I should warn them not to do this or that, or I should send a letter and tell them that it is foolish to have a doctrine of communism. That may be my opinion or your opinion. Exactly how my functioning in that way is going to help anybody I do not see. Remember, the world has many countries, small and big. There are some countries which by virtue of many things are called Great Powers. They are great nations with great resources behind them and inevitably they play a great part in world history today.

There is the United States of America, a Great Power, a great democratic Power. There is the United Kingdom. There is the U.S.S.R. All these, quite apart from their policies, are Great Powers influencing the world's history today. Now, take China. Can anyone deny China at the present moment the right of a Great Power, from the point of view of strength and power, to mould events—not in the world, but her own—and shape her destiny or round about her? She is a Great Power, regardless of whether you like or dislike it. It is true that she is controlled today by communists, as Russia is. It is an interesting question whether her shape or type of communism may be the same or different, how she will develop, how closely they will be associated together.

These are interesting questions which you may go into. But the point at issue is this. Here is a great nation, China, which cannot be ignored whatever resolution you may pass and whatever speeches you may deliver. Here is this great nation, the United States of America. You cannot ignore that nation. By talking about American imperialism or American dollars people seem to imagine that because you have got a phrase or slogan, or because there is some aspect of the myriad shapes of American life which you do not like, therefore you should condemn the whole nation and say you should ignore it. So we have to take facts as they are. The facts are that there are some great nations in this world with concentration of power in their hands, influencing many other nations. That being so, and it also being so that there is a conflict between these great nations, an ideological conflict as well as, if you like, a political conflict—although a great deal is said about ideology, I rather doubt if ideologies come much into the picture except as a weapon, except as something to use in the other fight; anyhow, these great countries, by a succession of events, have become opposed to each other, politically and



otherwise. What are we to do about it? Either they have a war and try to suppress or defeat each other, or one group triumphs and the other is defeated. What else? Is there any other way?

The only other way presumably can be that first of all they avoid war; secondly, they develop in their own areas as they like, without any interference from the others, and they influence each other in a variety of ways. It is possible that that way the contradictions, etc., involved may gradually be solved or they may not be ultimately solved. I am not a prophet, I do not know. But the way of war anyway is between them, and because of the concentration of power in the hands of these great, big nations and because that power is not so very unevenly matched, it means a very disastrous war. It means ultimately no victory—maybe a military victory, but no real victory, that is, if by victory you mean the achievement of certain objectives.

If you talk of democracy, well, I doubt if after the terrible disaster of a world war democracy can survive; the democratic nations may win the war—mind you, I have little doubt about that—but I doubt if after the disaster of a world war democracy can survive, because physical conditions may be different. I doubt even if relatively high standards of living can survive in the world, and many other things may happen. Anyhow, because of this, these great nations—all of them—wish to avoid war. I have no doubt about it. Can anyone say that America wants war here and today? Anything more wrong I cannot imagine. It is absolutely, completely wrong. If America wants war, she can have it. Who can prevent it? But she does not. Obviously she wants to avoid war because she feels the great dangers to the world and to everybody in a world war. So does England want to avoid war. But still forces are compelling them in a direction which may end in war. And the whole problem today is how to prevent that. That is the problem for England, America and for us, and for other countries also, I hope.

So the talk at this moment of this group and that group and of our policy being one of sitting on the fence—I do not understand. I say we have taken a more active part in the past two or three years in foreign policy than many other countries, barring the Big Powers. I do not understand this business, except that these people who talk like that know nothing about what they are talking of and do not study or read or understand what is happening around them. I have said repeatedly in this House that I just do not want to get entangled in foreign affairs; I have no desire; I have no ambition that way. My work in this country is big and difficult enough. Why should I get entangled? But how can I help it? I get entangled, our country gets entangled, for a variety of reasons. We cannot help it. Today, at this moment I say we are not shouting much. I suppose some honourable Members think that taking part in foreign affairs means delivering impassioned orations condemning this or that. It is true that we have not taken part in foreign affairs that

way, and we do not propose to take part in foreign affairs that way. We take part daily and hourly in decisions, in consultations, whether it is at the United Nations, at Lake Success or the various capitals of the world, and may I here say that we have been served very well by our representatives in the important capitals of the world. There is often some criticism about them and it is difficult for them to reply to that criticism and it is not easy for me to go out and talk about our Ambassadors. But I say clearly here and now that we have been served very well by our Ambassadors in the principal capitals of the world, at Lake Success, in Washington, in London, in Peking and Moscow.

Today you might have read in the newspapers of a certain initiative that our representatives at Lake Success took in common with a large number of other Asian representatives to make a certain suggestion or proposal about asking the Chinese Government for a ceasefire and not to go beyond the 38th parallel. You see how things have changed. We talked about the 38th parallel in another connection some time ago. Now the roles for the moment are reversed and they may be reversed again in the future. It is not realism to talk as if nothing had happened. So our representative, Shri B.N. Rau, made this proposal and the representatives of almost every Asian country agreed with it and they put that forward. I do not know what the reaction of the Chinese Government will be but I welcome the initiative of our representative and I am quite sure that every peace-loving individual, wherever he may be, will welcome it and I feel sure that the Governments of the U.S.A. and U.K. will welcome it. This does not solve any problem; the problems are too big to be solved but when you are driving hard towards a catastrophe and disaster, every move gives you time to consider and negotiate and this is useful and valuable. Therefore this is a good move and I hope it will succeed and if it does succeed, it will bring a certain relief not only to the harassed people who are facing trouble but even to those people not less harassed who have to think about these matters at a distance. So we are functioning all the time to the best of our ability.

What does it mean when people talk—I had not used the words this bloc or that bloc in my address to this House yesterday, but these words have been bandied about since I spoke. I am not thinking in terms of blocs. It does not interest me very much. I am thinking in terms of what my policy is to be on a specific subject. Acharya Kripalani said: "What is this? You say you judge every policy on merits. Can any question be judged apart from a hundred and one other questions?"<sup>6</sup> Acharya Kripalani in an oratorical way put up a question

6. J.B. Kripalani criticised India's support for U.N. membership for China and for war against North Korea as isolated actions taken without due regard to all the factors.



and gave his own answer. Who judges questions cut off from other questions? Maybe in an academic talk that may be done. No person dealing with realities can do so. In fact every question that comes before us has to be judged from a hundred different viewpoints, the effect of it, the consequences of it and so on and so forth. In every matter that comes up we are fully consulting people and countries with which we are friendly. I can only say that we are having friendly consultations with a large number of countries. We are continually consulting them. There is hardly a thing we do which we do not tell the countries with whom we are having friendly contacts; we talk with countries of the Commonwealth. Of course we are in close touch in regard to consultations, etc., with the U.S.A., with other countries; we have been in close contact with the South East Asian countries, with Burma, Indonesia. They are constantly telling us what they do. All this process goes on all the time and the result of that is we arrive at a certain decision which may fit in with what some countries think. If it does not wholly fit in, we always try to make it fit in. If our viewpoint is different, do you want me then to say that we should give up our viewpoint or the result that we have arrived at because somebody else thinks differently or some other nations think so? Presumably not. I do not understand all this long argument and people repeatedly saying that. I just would not do that. I am on my side and on nobody else's side. I am on my country's side and nobody else's side.

We have many friends and we collaborate and cooperate with them. But I am not prepared to surrender my judgment or my country's judgment or my country's position to any single country or group of countries. Then again some people say we are isolated. I do not know what isolation means. We are not isolated; we function with others.

I beg this House to consider Asia specially. Asia is in a tremendous ferment of change. One does not know whether that change is good or bad. It may be bad but as I see the world, it is not a question of Asia only. I see many things taking place which I dislike intensely and for the moment I am not talking of war and peace which are bad enough but rather about the whole temper of people, the whole tone of people, of all that one holds precious in life which gradually seems to be fading out in whatever country you may go to. People have become more brutal in thought, speech and action and all the graciousness and gentleness of life goes away and all the other human values and standards weaken. Of course, plenty of them remain. I am not saying everything worthwhile has gone away completely, but I say this coarsening process is going on all over the world, including our own country, I am sorry to say. We are being coarsened, vulgarized all over the world because of many reasons but chiefly because of the succession of wars and violence. Whatever else they may do, they coarsen and vulgarize and I am not quite sure whether, if this process goes on and human values go on falling, whether for many sensitive

persons life will offer very much of value at all. We talk of victory and defeat, war and peace. Surely we fight a war to gain some objectives and we want a victory for certain objectives and not merely to say that we have knocked down the other person. Now these very objectives for which human life and human society have stood all these years seem to be challenged. They are challenged sometimes by some theory of ideology. They are challenged by authoritarianism which crushes the individual and they are challenged even in democratic societies, not by democracy but by this growth of violence and by the mentality that is bred by war. So in this state of affairs are we to allow ourselves to be swept away and lose all our integrity of thought or action or should we hold fast to it and try to understand our friends, try to go with them and try to cooperate with them? Of course where we feel that there is a wrong course of action we part company. I do not see how any honourable Member can have any doubt when such a thing occurs. One has to follow the right course and follow it regardless of consequences. We talk of possible invasions of India or our frontiers being threatened or anything happening even far from India, which may be bad, which may be dangerous to the world. I hope we have still enough moral fibre and spirit left in us to face any danger not only on the borders of our country but far away, if we think that is a danger to the world.

There are two or three other matters, if I may deal with them separately. One is in regard to Nepal. My attention has been drawn to the fact that perhaps I did an injustice in what I said about the State of Nepal. My description of the independence of Nepal, I am told, was perhaps not quite correct. I think it was perfectly correct, but I had been somewhat misunderstood. What I said yesterday was this, that the independence of a country is ultimately judged by the foreign relations of that country. A country can be completely independent as Nepal has been; but if it has no foreign relations in the larger comity of nations, it does not count in the same way as an independent country. I pointed out that during the last hundred years or more, although Nepal was an independent country, it had no foreign relations except through the British in India. That was their only window to the outside world. That is true. It was only recently, in the last twenty or thirty years, that I believe they had an Ambassador at the Court of St James, and later in America. What I wish to make clear is that I was not hinting at the fact that the British Government in India prevented them from doing so, but rather that they themselves did not think it necessary or desirable or feasible to develop these international contacts. Much has been said about Nepal in the course of this debate. I do not wish to add anything to what I said yesterday. I think I have made our position clear enough. It is now, I think, almost exactly a month since this new situation arose in Nepal and we have dealt with it, I think, I may well claim, with a very great deal of patience. We have been criticised by various people on



various grounds because of that, on opposing grounds. Nevertheless we do not propose to be rushed. What I said yesterday was clear enough indication not only of how our minds are working, but of the steps that we are taking, or rather the line that we are adopting in our talks. We propose to adhere to that line and as soon as the time comes when I have to make any precise formal announcement, I shall come to this House and make it.

About China, about Tibet more particularly, Professor Ranga was somewhat displeased at my referring occasionally to the Chinese suzerainty over Tibet.<sup>7</sup> Please note that I used the word suzerainty not sovereignty. There is a slight difference, not much. I was telling the House of a historical fact; I was not discussing the future. It is a historical fact and in the context of things it is perfectly true that we have admitted repeatedly this Chinese suzerainty over Tibet just as we have laid stress on Tibet's autonomy. But, apart from this historical or legal or constitutional argument, or even the argument that Mr Gautam raised about buffer States and the like,<sup>8</sup> which, if I may say so, is not much of an argument—it may be his desire and my desire, but it is not an argument—the real point to be made is that it is not right for any country to talk about its sovereignty or suzerainty over any area outside its own immediate range. This is to say, if Tibet is different from China, it should ultimately be the wishes of the people of Tibet that should prevail and not any legal or constitutional arguments. That I think is a valid point. Whether the people of Tibet are strong enough to do that or not is another matter. Whether we are strong enough or any other country is strong enough to see that that is done is another matter also. But it is a right and proper thing to say, and I see no difficulty in saying it to the Chinese Government, that whether you have suzerainty over Tibet or sovereignty over Tibet, surely, according to any principles, principles you proclaim and the principles I proclaim, the last voice in regard to Tibet should be the voice of the people of Tibet and of nobody else.

Sir, I do not know how you are going to proceed about this Motion. There are a number of amendments. I cannot accept any amendment. I think

7. N.G. Ranga asked whether, by talking repeatedly of Chinese sovereignty over Tibet, India was "not giving a blank cheque to be signed on our behalf by somebody else in order to spread their own imperialist tentacles."
8. Maintaining that Tibet must remain an independent country, Mohanlal Gautam said that her independence was all the more essential, for the existence of a buffer State between India and China would be helpful in the maintenance of world peace.

Mr Anthony's<sup>9</sup> amendment was about our resisting communistic aggression. I do not just understand how that amendment fits in. I am going to resist every type of aggression, communist or other, whatever it may be. Why put it in?

There is one other matter, and I am sorry to take more of the time of the House. Pandit Kunzru criticised very much the attitude that we have taken up in the United Nations.<sup>10</sup> That attitude has been governed by two factors. One is our judging the situation and deciding what would help at the time. The other was our feeling throughout that it is not much good passing resolutions, which, generally speaking, are condemnatory and our associating ourselves in condemnation even though that condemnation might be justified, because that does not help. We wanted to find a way out. Our associating ourselves with that particular resolution meant that the possible capacity we have to help was greatly reduced. Just having condemned, we could not approach the other party, we could not deal with it, we could not understand the other party's viewpoint and place it before our other colleagues and friendly countries; and the result would be that the useful function or service that we perform, we could not perform. Apart from this, there was this general approach which we have had in this matter. Either you are aiming at conflict or at peace and settlement. If one is aiming at peace and settlement, one should adopt ways that lead to peace and not ways that lead to war. It may be that people do not want war but it is a risky business going that way because it often leads to war. We have seen in this particular case that action has been taken which was thought would not lead to an extension of the fighting area, but which did lead to consequences which the people did not like or did not foresee. Therefore, we felt that we should not support those resolutions because that meant reducing the chances of a settlement of this question by peaceful methods.

9. Frank Anthony.

10. H.N. Kunzru criticised the Government for not supporting the United Nations by refusing to accept the proposal, made in consonance with Article 43 of the Charter, whereby each member State would maintain a unit within its armed forces ready to help the U.N. in an emergency.



## 16. Cable to K.M. Panikkar<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram 325 dated 7th December. We agree generally with the line taken in your conversation with Chang.<sup>2</sup> In view, however, of importance of your forthcoming interview with Chou En-lai, we consider it desirable to state precisely our position on various points.

2. We adhere to the view that the first essential is to agree to ceasefire so that negotiations can take place in a calm atmosphere. Creation of demilitarised zone is necessary. This is partly a military issue to be discussed and decided on advice of military experts of both sides. Withdrawal of U.N. forces, however, to the 38th parallel should be acceptable. To press for complete withdrawal from Korea of U.N. forces as a condition precedent to ceasefire or other negotiations is not practicable and would merely create great difficulties and antagonism.

3. The first question to be discussed would be the future of Korea and then of Formosa. China's participation on footing of equality in all these negotiations is axiomatic. China's admission to the United Nations, for which we have been working throughout, is eminently desirable. Success, however, of our efforts and fulfilment of China's desire in this respect will naturally depend on progress of negotiations.

4. Future of Korea. U.N. have already declared their objective as creation of a united and independent Korea. China should certainly be free to suggest solution of the Korean problem by Koreans themselves.<sup>3</sup> We should not however advise undue insistence on withdrawal of all foreign troops as essential condition of overall settlement regarding Korea, since it affects prestige of the United Nations which was responsible for sending troops. She should not attempt to diminish prestige and authority of the organisation which she

1. New Delhi, 8 December 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. Chang Han-fu (b. 1905); Secretary to Chou En-lai, 1937-45; at this time the senior Vice Foreign Minister. Panikkar stated that he had told Chang Han-fu on 7 December that as China and North Korea were in a superior military situation at the time, their willingness to halt at the 38th parallel would strengthen chances of a peaceful settlement with due regard to Chinese interests. Both parties should accept a ceasefire with a demilitarised zone and the future of Korea be settled at a conference of the concerned Great Powers with China as a full and equal participant. He had also told Chang that India was assured that the question of Formosa would also be settled at the conference on the basis of the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations and China's membership of the U.N. would follow.

3. Chang had told Panikkar that the Korean problem should be solved by the Koreans themselves after the withdrawal of all foreign troops.

proposes to join, by insistence on proposal which must cause resentment to that organisation.

5. We have made it clear to all concerned that, in accordance with the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations, Formosa should return to China. Question of how and when, however, is full of difficulty and it would be desirable to leave this for later consideration. You will appreciate that this affects entire strategic and defensive position of the U.S.A. in the Pacific, including the defence of Japan.

6. We would again emphasise vital need of ceasefire to be followed by Great Power negotiations. Since China's delegation is already in New York,<sup>4</sup> their participation can be arranged for immediately. While we would be ready to move amendments to the six-Power resolution,<sup>5</sup> in keeping with what we have said above, we doubt whether discussion of either original resolution or our amendments will be of practical value, if fighting goes on. It seems to us that it is essential, to begin with, to have agreement of Great Powers, especially China and the U.S.A., through informal negotiation. Later U.N., which is seized of the Korean problem, may ratify agreement. In the complicated situation that exists today, it is unwise to try to settle everything at one time. It is better to go step by step. The first step is ceasefire and agreement to negotiate on all connected matters on basis of equality. Subsequent steps will then be easier.

4. A Chinese delegation, led by Wu Hsiu-chuan, arrived in New York on 24 November.
5. The six Powers, whose draft resolution was vetoed by the U.S.S.R. in the Security Council on 30 November, had introduced in the General Assembly on 7 December a similar resolution, noting that the Chinese forces had been conducting military operations against U.N. forces and asking the Assembly to make appropriate recommendations in view of the stalemate in the Council.

## 17. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram 500 dated 8th December. Since no reply has come yet from Peking, either to your proposal to Wu<sup>2</sup> or to the thirteen-Power appeal to

1. New Delhi, 9 December 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Wu Hsiu-chuan (b. 1908); joined Red Army, 1932; participated in the Long March, 1934-35; joined foreign service, 1949; Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1951-52 and 1966; Ambassador to Yugoslavia, 1955-58. Rau had proposed to Wu on 1 December that before withdrawal of American forces there must be a ceasefire, followed by a demilitarized zone.



China, we are indicating below how you should act if the six-Power resolution is considered and voted upon before Peking's reply is received.<sup>3</sup> Military situation has made the six-Power resolution wholly unrealistic. We can therefore either abstain from participating in voting or move new resolution by way of amendment. Such new resolution would only have value if the U.S.A. and the U.K. are agreeable to it. Otherwise it is better to explain our position fully and not participate in voting.

New resolution should be to the following effect:

- (1) There should be immediate negotiation to end hostilities.
- (2) Assurance to China of participation, on footing of equality, in discussions on Korea and Formosa that will follow cessation of hostilities.

(1) above is in accord with the announced ten-point programme of Truman and Attlee<sup>4</sup> and should be acceptable to the U.S.A. and the U.K. No mention of the 38th parallel or demilitarized zone need be made. These details can be settled during negotiations.

Reference to Formosa does not appear to us to conflict with No. 6 of the ten-point Attlee-Truman programme.<sup>5</sup>

Though this need not be mentioned in the resolution, we adhere to our view that negotiations on Korea between China, the U.K., and the U.S.A. will have to take place informally if subsequent U.N. consideration, specially of the Formosan problem, is to have any chance of success. Since U.N. objective is creation of a united and independent Korea, a common basis for discussion between China on the one hand and the U.K. and the U.S.A. on the other, that is consistent with U.N. policy, can be said to exist already.

In the event of proposed amending resolution not being agreeable to the U.K. and the U.S.A., this need not be moved and you should explain our position on lines already indicated. You should therefore consult the U.K. and the U.S.A. informally and also the Asian nations with whose representatives you have been conferring. We should like you to keep in close touch with these Asian nations.

In the event of any reply coming from Peking matter may have to be reconsidered.

3. Wu had told Rau that if the General Assembly passed the six-Power resolution, it would lead to world war.
4. In a joint communique on 8 December, Truman and Attlee, while expressing their readiness to seek an end to the hostilities in Korea by means of negotiation, stated that there could be "no thought of appeasement or rewarding aggressor, whether in the Far East or elsewhere".
5. It envisaged agreement that the question of Formosa should be settled by peaceful means and in such a way as to safeguard the interests of the people of Formosa and the maintenance of peace and security in the Pacific and that consideration of this question by the U.N. would contribute to those ends.

## 18. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

...Since we do not consider China's desire for inclusion of Formosa in scope of negotiations that will follow ceasefire as unreasonable, we should not be party to moving resolution which we know will not give them satisfaction and rejection of which by them will put them in the wrong in the eyes of many of those who sponsored the thirteen-Power appeal. Our object is to stop drift towards war and not to put either China or the U.S.A. in the wrong. A resolution that does not stop this drift can serve no useful purpose. At the same time we are anxious to do everything in our power to preserve peace. We have explained our attitude fully to you. In changing situation you should exercise your discretion on lines indicated....

1. New Delhi, 10 December 1950. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

## 19. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

Your telegrams 505 and 506.<sup>2</sup> We have received long message from Panikkar reporting his talk with Chou En-lai who made it clear that China was unable to commit herself to India's proposals, namely, ceasefire, demilitarised zone and discussion on equal basis of Korea and Formosa, unless American acceptance of those proposals was forthcoming. According to him, the key to stopping of hostilities in Korea is the U.S. I am conveying Panikkar's full message to Attlee through Krishna Menon and suggesting that the U.S. be persuaded to modify its position regarding Formosa. If America remains adamant and in consequence China's consent also lacking, then neither ceasefire nor broader negotiations take place. Your two resolutions then likely to be

1. New Delhi, 12 December 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Rau reported on 11 December that the thirteen countries, which had earlier issued an appeal to China and North Korea, had now decided to introduce in the General Assembly two resolutions, the first requesting the President of the Assembly to form a group of three persons, including himself, to determine the basis for arranging a satisfactory ceasefire, and the second suggesting the setting up of a committee to make recommendations for a peaceful settlement of existing issues.



infructuous and might only result in embarrassment both for China and for sponsors.<sup>3</sup>

In view of this it is important to mark time till result of approach to the U.S. is known.<sup>4</sup>

3. Rau stated that the second resolution would open the door to discussions on all East Asian questions, including Formosa and Chinese representation in the U.N., and was not likely to be opposed by the U.S.A.
4. Both the resolutions were eventually introduced on 12 December, the first sponsored by all the thirteen countries, and the second by the same countries with the exception of the Philippines.

## 20. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

... We have repeatedly informed you of the Chinese view of ceasefire and scope and basis of negotiations to follow. Peking does not regard the two matters independently. Consistent with proposal that we ourselves have made to Peking, we cannot without weakening such influence as we have with the Chinese Government hold China unreasonable if she declines to discuss ceasefire without assurance regarding discussion of position of Formosa which not only ourselves but the United Kingdom, at least in private discussion with us, consider intrinsically fair. In view of your sponsorship of the ceasefire proposal as a separate resolution<sup>2</sup> it is almost certain Americans would expect us to treat China as guilty party if she refuses to consider ceasefire without what Americans look upon as "political strings." Indeed I should be surprised if after such refusal Americans do not revert to idea of arraigning China as aggressor. We could not, as I have already indicated, support any such move. I must therefore ask you to make no comment regarding Wu's reply to the three-men commission's approaches on ceasefire<sup>3</sup> without prior reference and receipt of instructions from us.

1. New Delhi, 15 December 1950. Copy in V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L. Extracts.
2. Introducing the two Asian nations' resolutions in the First Committee on 12 December, Rau had sought priority of discussion for the first resolution. On 14 December, the General Assembly adopted this resolution and Nasrollah Entezam, President of the Assembly, constituted a Ceasefire Group comprising himself, B.N. Rau and Lester Pearson.
3. In a message to Peking on 16 December, the Ceasefire Group offered to discuss ceasefire with the Chinese authorities either in New York or elsewhere. The same day, Wu called the "ceasefire first" proposal a "trap" designed to tie the hands of the Chinese and the North Koreans to enable the U.S. to occupy Formosa.

## 21. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram No. 7178 dated 18 December<sup>2</sup> reached me this morning. I am giving earnest consideration to your suggestion. But I confess I do not see how I can act now as you suggest. The shape and practical difficulties are formidable. In India many difficult matters have to be dealt with before I go. My sudden departure would have great upsetting effect but stakes are so high and danger of world war so great that I would certainly be prepared to ignore other matters and visit Peking if at all possible provided I saw some light as to what I can do there in the circumstances. We have generally supported at Lake success Chinese attitude as reported to us by Panikkar. Since then Chinese public statements have gone somewhat beyond this. It may be possible to get China's assurance that previous attitude stood. But what am I to do afterwards? Real question is of influencing the United States<sup>3</sup> and that appears to be wholly beyond my capacity. I can perhaps get clarification of Chinese attitude through Panikkar by telegram and suggest visit later. Meanwhile we can try to get the United Kingdom's support in approach to the United States. Even so little hope of producing results.

1. New Delhi, 20 December 1950. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Krishna Menon suggested that irrespective of considerations of preoccupation, convention, protocol or notions of prestige, Nehru should go to Peking to confer with the Chinese Government before coming to London for the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference.
3. Loy Henderson had informed the Ministry of External Affairs on 18 December that the U.S.A. would oppose linking up the question of Formosa to a Korean settlement and would not be willing to make any prior commitment as to their position on such other questions.

## 22. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

We have given repeated and anxious consideration to your messages.<sup>2</sup> We realise fully the dangers of the situation and no question of prestige would deter me from taking a step which might help in preservation of peace. I did

1. New Delhi, 22 December 1950. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Krishna Menon strongly urged that Nehru should visit Peking as a peace initiative. Disagreeing with Nehru about his capacity to influence the U.S., he said that his visit to Peking would create an impression on public opinion in the U.S.



not even underrate my influence on people or on Government. But I am not convinced that step you suggest will be really helpful at this stage. It would be dramatic enough and might even make people furiously to think. But it is also likely to produce certain harmful results and then any further step would become much more difficult. I have given up the idea of going to Peking at present but I am prepared to go there as soon as I feel that such visit might produce results. I feel the first step now must be a message from me to Attlee. Please convey the following message<sup>3</sup> to him.

3. See the next item.

### 23. Message to C.R. Attlee<sup>1</sup>

I need hardly tell you that my colleagues and I have viewed with deep distress the rapid deterioration of the situation and drift to what appears to be inevitably war. I venture to address you frankly; any other way would be unfair and a real error at critical moment. I need not point out to you the terrible consequences of world war. You know better than I the fate that will descend on Western Europe. Such a war will only bring vast destruction and devastation and not peace or the attainment of any other objective which we may have. Whatever else might survive another world war, democracy as we know it and much else that we stand for will pass away. Even victory if it comes after many years of war must face conditions which would breed anarchy or communism.

2. I can speak with greater confidence of Asia and I fear there is utter lack of understanding especially in the United States of present conditions in Asia and the mood of this vast continent. China today is proud and challengeful of insults or casual treatment and has tremendous capacity to resist. Her non-admission to the U.N. seriously weakened that organisation. It does not disable China but merely antagonises her. Asian sentiment does not like much that China has done but is strongly critical of American attitude during this great crisis. If Chiang Kai-shek's armies are used by the U.S.A. to fight China<sup>2</sup> this will produce unfortunate reactions throughout Asia. It is not realised that a tremendous people's revolution has taken place in China and that all over

1. New Delhi, 22 December 1950. Copy in V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

2. Chiang Kai-shek had offered 33,000 Nationalist Chinese troops to fight against the North Koreans soon after the war started in June 1950, but the offer was held in abeyance.

Asia masses of people are in ferment. This situation cannot be dealt with in the way America seeks to do however great the military power applied. Even atomic bombs will not make a vital military difference but their use in Asia will permanently embitter people's minds in this continent.

3. Present situation demonstrates absolute futility of world war to gain any objective. If this is so and when only certain result of war is terrible destruction then no consideration of embarrassment or prestige must come in our way to take every step to prevent such a catastrophe. I am convinced that if we are earnest about it war will not come.

4. The main obstacle to peace talks with China has been Formosa. The U.K. and India have stated clearly that the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations hold and must be given effect to though the manner and timing of doing so can be considered later. The U.S.A., however, holds on to a contrary and, I think, wrong view. Are we to have world war because of Formosa? I submit that no responsible Government or person may deadlock in this way with the fate of the world and of hundreds of millions of people. Therefore a fresh effort to persuade the U.S.A. to take a more realistic view of the question of Formosa is essential.

5. In my distress of mind I have thought repeatedly of what helpful step I might take. I have even thought of going to Peking or to Washington but then I felt I could not have received much from Peking in existing circumstances. It is America that has to be approached first. India's voice by itself cannot influence the U.S. sufficiently but if the U.K. added her powerful voice also then it might well make a difference. If the countries of Western Europe which stand in dire peril also spoke firmly and together it would be even more helpful. Should it appear desirable at any time I would willingly go to Peking. But it seems essential to me that our first approach must be to the U.S.

6. Within a few days I hope to meet you. Reports have appeared in the press of the Prime Ministers' Conference considering the question of collective defence.<sup>3</sup> But I earnestly hope every effort will be made to avoid the impression that this Conference is a preparation for war. While defence cannot be neglected the whole character of the Conference should be such as to impress upon the world that it is actively working for peace. In this crisis of history this is the turn we should endeavour to give to the Conference.

7. You will forgive that I venture taking the liberty to address you in this fashion. I have done so in all friendliness and because I felt you would not misunderstand me. The perils that surround us are too great for us not to be frank with each other.

3. On 20 December, P.T.I.-Reuter quoted "well informed quarters" in London to say that a review of the current international situation with emphasis on collective defence would be the main aim of the Conference beginning on 4 January 1951.



## 24. Cable to K.M. Panikkar<sup>1</sup>

...It is important that nature of forthcoming Conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers in London should be clearly explained to Peking Government to avoid misunderstanding on their part. This Conference was convened some time ago<sup>2</sup> and is not connected with recent breakdown over Korea in Lake Success. India will however use occasion to work for peace notwithstanding what has happened and will seek to enlist support of all Commonwealth countries for this purpose.

In public statements made by Wu in New York, Chinese demands have covered large ground.<sup>3</sup> You will recall that proposals you were authorised to make earlier this month were limited to ceasefire in Korea, demilitarized zone, to be followed by negotiations on Korea and discussion on the future of Formosa on the basis of the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations.

We should like to know precisely whether China is still willing to negotiate for settlement on this basis which safeguards her position completely. It will not be easy to secure American agreement to this. We regard this basis however as entirely reasonable and shall work for its acceptance. Any increase at this stage by China of her demand will rule out possibility of peaceful settlement and make war inevitable.

That China should participate in settlement of Far Eastern problems on basis of equality goes without saying. Whatever war preparations may be going on in the United States,<sup>4</sup> it must be remembered that all other countries, more especially in Western Europe and Asia, are anxious to avoid war. We earnestly hope that China will not take any step which makes maintenance of peace very difficult, if not impossible.

Contents of my telegrams to Krishna Menon and Rau must not be conveyed to Peking Government. But you may tell them that we are trying continuously to work for peace and still hope that our efforts might succeed.

1. New Delhi, 22 December 1950. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

2. Attlee had suggested to Nehru on 24 October 1950 a meeting of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers in the first half of December to discuss the international situation. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Volume 15 Part I, p. 425.

3. Wu stated on 16 December that the terms on which his Government were willing to try to advise the Chinese "volunteers" in Korea to withdraw included: (1) withdrawal of U.N. forces from Korea, (2) ending of the American occupation of Formosa, and (3) admission of People's China to the United Nations.

4. On 16 December, Truman proclaimed emergency in the U.S. and outlined plans for expansion of U.S. armed forces, military production and essential strategic materials.

## 25. Cable to K.M. Panikkar<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram No. 354 dated 25th December.<sup>2</sup>

We fully understand Chinese position regarding Formosa and are pressing for its acceptance by the U.S.A. We hope to have support from other countries also in this matter.

As regards China's entry into the United Nations, please refer to paragraph 3 of my telegram No. 22413 dated 8th December.<sup>3</sup> We are firmly of opinion and so are many countries now that new China must be admitted to the U.N. This appears to us to be inevitable after any settlement of Korea and Formosa. We suggest however that this should not be made condition precedent by Peking to negotiation on Korea and Formosa, immediate settlement of which two issues is vital to world peace. We shall of course continue to press for it.

As regards withdrawal of U.N. troops, clearly this should be included in discussion on future of Korea. We would not advise undue insistence on immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops as essential condition of overall settlement regarding Korea, since immediately this will create many difficulties, but such withdrawal should normally follow later.

1. New Delhi, 26 December 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Panikkar thought that China would not be prepared to discuss Korea without prior acceptance in principle of her claim on Formosa and her admission to the U.N.
3. See *ante*, pp. 450-451.

## 26. Cable to K.M. Panikkar<sup>1</sup>

Received your letters of 23rd November<sup>2</sup> and 7th December<sup>3</sup> with enclosures. I fully appreciate your analysis which will help us. I think there is growing

1. New Delhi, 30 December 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Panikkar thought that the Chinese did not desire war but were fully prepared to meet that eventuality and were, in fact, setting the pace in the Korean war while the Soviets were advising patience and moderation.
3. Panikkar noted that having marched into Tibet, the Chinese were persevering by peaceful methods. Indian representations had, without spoiling India's relations with China, made her realise "that we are firm where our interests are concerned." He thought that Peking was "most anxious" to develop friendly relations with India.



realisation of it in other countries. Even the Australian Prime Minister displayed greater understanding.<sup>4</sup> I am afraid however that belief of Chinese Government and people of inevitability of war is making any attempt at peace more and more difficult. China's position strong in every way. They need take no risks and yet they can be a little more accommodating in smaller matters and in approach.

4. R.G. Menzies visited India from 25 to 27 December 1950.

## 27. India's China Policy<sup>1</sup>

Question: Will you press for the admission of China into the United Nations at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference?

Jawaharlal Nehru: Yes, I will certainly press the question of admitting the Peking Government into the United Nations.

Q: Have you enunciated a policy on China?

JN: We have enunciated a policy on China clearly and there will be no change in it. It has been our policy that China should be admitted into the United Nations and we still maintain that China should have a place in that body.

Q: What is your message for the country?

JN: Keep cheerful with a firm upper lip and work hard.

1. Interview to the press before leaving for London to attend the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference, Bombay, 2 January 1951. From the *National Herald* and *The Hindustan Times*, 3 January 1951.

## 28. Fresh Approaches by the Commonwealth Nations<sup>1</sup>

Question: What is your reading of the international situation in terms of peace or war?

Jawaharlal Nehru: The world is passing through a critical stage, but forces for avoidance of war are working their hardest. The chief hope of peace lies in calm consideration of the events and lessening of the fear. The Commonwealth nations will make fresh approaches to limit the Korean conflict.

India wants Korea to be independent and is watching very closely the situation in Tibet.

The new China is one of the major factors of the twentieth century. While the Peking Government, no doubt, pursues a close policy with Moscow, China is no satellite of the Soviet Union.

Asia is going through very big changes in gradual elimination of colonialism. We can describe Asian countries gathering round India as a third area of no conflict.

Q: What is your idea about the Korean war?

JN: I am hopeful that the London Conference will carry the whole international situation nearer to peace.

Q: Would you like to comment on the report that Mr Liaquat Ali Khan is not attending the Commonwealth Conference because the Kashmir issue is not included in the agenda?

JN: I do not know that he is going to be absent. All I can say is that I am sorry that he is not coming, if he does not come.

Q: Will India support Egypt's demands for the evacuation of British troops from the Suez Canal area?

JN: India is in favour of the total removal of foreign troops everywhere, but in the case of war it is unavoidable that troops should be stationed to safeguard lines of communications and strengthen defence.

1. Interview to the press at Cairo, 3 January 1951. From the *National Herald*, 4 January 1951.



## 29. Need for a Realistic Approach<sup>1</sup>

...Mr Nehru said that he found himself in broad agreement with Mr Attlee's general appreciation of the world situation. Although in war Europe would be the greatest danger-point, he thought that at the present moment the Far East was the most dangerous area. India was naturally most closely concerned with what happened in the Far East; and he therefore proposed to put his views very frankly before the Conference.

He agreed with Mr Attlee's statement of aims and also with his views on the need for a realistic approach to the facts. Many of the present troubles of the world had arisen from a failure to face facts. Some people seemed to think that the most important fact at the moment was the danger of communism or of Russian imperialist expansionism; but to say this was not to explain the situation or to help in facing it. There were many facets to the problems, and one of the most important was the emergence of China as an integrated and centralised Power. This, indeed, was one of the most important events of the century. The question whether the Chinese People's Government was recognised by this or that foreign country was comparatively technical. The really important need was that all should realise that China had now emerged as a Great Power. This had changed the whole balance of power in Asia. Many people might not like this, particularly because of China's present affiliations with Russia; but the fact remained, and to found a policy on any other basis would be completely unrealistic.

Mr Nehru said that if a major war broke out with China, he could not himself see how it would ever be possible to bring such a war to a conclusive end. India had thought it advisable to shape her policy towards China in such a way as to make it clear that Russia was not the only possible friend to whom China could look. India had therefore done her best to adopt a friendly attitude towards China, even while disapproving of some of the actions of the Chinese People's Government. It was perhaps in consequence of this policy that he had just heard from his Ambassador in Peking that the Chinese Foreign Minister had expressed the hope that the deliberations at the present meeting might help to ensure the preservation of peace in Asia.

1. Minutes of the first meeting of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers, London, 4 January 1951. J.N. Collection. Extracts. For the minutes of this meeting dealing with Kashmir, see *ante*, pp. 278-279.

Mr Nehru said that it was not enough to say that it was our policy to preserve peace; we must take the necessary steps to preserve it and avoid any steps which might lead towards war. It was for this reason that India was particularly alarmed by the attitude of the United States Government towards China which seemed to be unrealistic and based on a false kind of sentiment. India was most anxious to cooperate with the United States; but she could not help feeling that the American attitude towards the Far East was mistaken; that, although their objectives might be sound, their methods of trying to achieve these were wrong; and that American policy might lead towards war because of its fatalistic acceptance of the inevitability of war.

In Asia, where many thousands of people were without the primary necessities of life, the best defence against communism was to raise living standards. If expenditure on defence were carried to lengths which interfered with the development of a sound economy or the social services, the power to check communist encroachment might be impaired. It was for this reason that India had decided to reduce by fifteen per cent her army and her military expenditure.

India was likely to have a common frontier with China extending over 2,000 miles, and was therefore very closely affected by developments in that country. India would repel any aggression against her with all her resources, but it seemed unwise to follow policies which might provoke aggression in the present or lay up trouble for the future. In his view the resolution which might be moved shortly in the Security Council naming China as an aggressor would bring the world close to world war. It was important to avoid the use of provocative language in the United Nations. India, though she was in sympathy with the objectives sought, sometimes felt herself unable to endorse the language of the resolutions moved in the United Nations, and on that account had found it necessary on occasions to abstain from voting.

Mr Nehru said he did not think the Soviet Union would provoke war, unless they thought they could secure an easy victory or were forced into it by the compulsion of circumstances. As for China, he had believed until two or three months ago that the People's Government were anxious to avoid war, so as to have time to repair the ravages of the civil war. There seemed to have been some change of policy in recent months, but he still believed that the Chinese Government did not want a general war. In these circumstances it was important to avoid actions which increased international tension, and he hoped that public references to rearmament could be made in a way which would not aggravate the present tension. He had grave apprehensions about the general policies which were being pursued by some nations and feared that they might lead to war.



### 30. The British Proposals for a Settlement<sup>1</sup>

... Mr Nehru said that he agreed that we must not be rushed into taking what was likely to be a momentous decision.<sup>2</sup> We might find that we had taken a step which would nullify any possibility of reaching a general settlement. He agreed that the resolutions before the First Committee were unsatisfactory<sup>3</sup> and that time was required to seek a better alternative. He was prepared, therefore, to give instructions to his representatives, both in New York and Washington, to press for delay. It was important to avoid the confusion which would arise if the proposals of the Ceasefire Group and those suggested by Mr Bevin were put forward simultaneously. The Group were about to produce a set of so-called 'principles' which would be designed, in fact, to gain the time for the further consideration which everybody thought necessary...

...Mr Nehru supported this point of view<sup>4</sup> and added that, if the Commonwealth countries were prepared at some stage or other to accept the Chinese People's Government in the United Nations, then the sooner the concession were made, and the more gracefully, the better would be the results....

...Mr Nehru thought that there was too much detail in the proposals made by Mr Bevin for a settlement in Korea.<sup>5</sup> To set down the detailed powers of the Commission would invite argument before the Commission was established. He thought it preferable, therefore, to give only broad powers to the Commission. He would himself prefer a revised and shortened version of Mr Bevin's proposals, which he circulated to the meeting....

Mr Nehru said that he felt strongly that Mr Bevin's three proposals should be regarded as three points in a single integrated plan. Indeed, he did not see that the policy had any chance of success if it were taken step by step. Proposals very much on the lines of Mr Bevin's for a settlement in Korea itself had

1. Minutes of the fourth meeting of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers, London, 5 January 1951. J.N. Collection. Extracts.
2. Ernest Bevin had at an earlier meeting presented some proposals for a general settlement of Korea and other related problems and suggested that a line of policy might be agreed with the U.S. and put forward at once by the Commonwealth representatives at the U.N.
3. The First Committee had three resolutions before it: (1) the six-Power resolution; (2) a Soviet resolution calling for immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops and decision of the Korean question by Koreans themselves; and (3) the twelve-Power resolution.
4. St Laurent suggested that apart from any question of rights it might be expedient to admit China to the U.N. if this meant her acceptance of the obligations of the Charter to help to preserve world peace.
5. These provided for a ceasefire, a renewal of the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations, and the possibility of establishing Formosa as a demilitarised area.

already been made to the Chinese People's Government with results which were well known, and there was no reason to suppose that, if Mr Bevin's proposals on Korea were advanced separately, the Chinese reaction would be any different....

### 31. Harmful Consequences of the American Approach<sup>1</sup>

...<sup>2</sup> Mr Nehru said that he had telegraphed to the Indian Embassy in Peking over the week-end and had also communicated with the Indian representative at the United Nations. He had heard from Peking that the 'principles' proposed by the Ceasefire Group were already known to the Chinese People's Government on 4th January and were not acceptable to them.<sup>3</sup> They were unwilling to consider a settlement of the Korean question independently of the question of Formosa. They looked upon attempts to isolate the Korean issue from the Formosa question as tending to favour the United States and constituting a threat to their security. The Indian Ambassador had said that the first question which the Chinese would ask on any proposals for a settlement would be whether American reactions to the proposals had been obtained. They had repeatedly indicated that they considered attempt to commit China to a point of view without an unmistakable indication of the American view as being unfair to China, and the only possible proposals which might evoke a favourable Chinese response would be the admission of the Chinese People's Government to the United Nations, a preliminary reaffirmation of the validity of the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations regarding Formosa, and then discussions about the ceasefire and the various stages of withdrawal from Korea. The

1. Minutes of the fifth meeting of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers, London, 8 January 1951. J.N. Collection. Extracts.
2. Bevin had stated that the U.S. Government were under increasing political pressure to prosecute a "limited" war against China and were determined to pursue this course even after the U.K. had cautioned them about its unforeseen consequences. He doubted whether it would be practicable any more to pursue his proposals of 5 January and invited the meeting to consider alternative courses.
3. The draft 'principles' proposed withdrawal by stages of all armed forces from Korea following a ceasefire, and interim arrangements by the U.N. for the administration of Korea pending the creation of a unified independent democratic State there. It was also suggested that the U.S. and the U.K. having announced, on 8 December, their readiness to seek with the U.S.S.R. and China a peace settlement of the existing issues, an appropriate body comprising these four countries might discuss such a settlement. The 'principles' were conveyed on 4 January to Panikkar, who was asked to obtain Peking's reaction to them.



Ambassador had been informed that the Chinese Government would have no contact with the Ceasefire Group....

Mr Nehru said that earlier speakers had stressed the importance of keeping in step with the United States.<sup>4</sup> When, however, American policy seemed to be running contrary to that which the Commonwealth countries believed to be right, it was for consideration whether we should not maintain what we believed to be the correct policy and seek to persuade the United States Government to conform to it. He would like to know what were the further steps to be taken by those who contemplated action on the lines suggested by the United States. Were they prepared to plan the invasion of Korea as a prelude to its subsequent reconquest? The resolution which the United States were contemplating, whether or not it led at once to general war with China, would certainly have the consequence of excluding all possibility of negotiations with the Chinese People's Government. If the democracies had to fight a major war against China, they would do so under most unfavourable circumstances, and with no likelihood of getting any advantageous settlement, despite the heavy cost. Should it not, therefore, be our main object to avoid such a war so long as there was any means of doing so? The Americans said that unless their resolution<sup>5</sup> was accepted the United Nations would be destroyed; but there was at least an equal risk that acceptance of that resolution would have the same result. For each State would be left to decide whether it should apply sanction against China which might lead to open hostilities. This was a dilemma in which Governments ought not to be placed by the United Nations. Thus, everything possible should be done to prevent the American resolution from being put forward at Lake Success. Commonwealth countries should point out in a friendly but firm way that the resolution could not be to the advantage in the long term either of the United States or of other free nations, and that, if nevertheless the United States insisted on bringing forward this resolution, the Commonwealth countries would feel obliged in the last resort to oppose it. He favoured an alternative approach on the lines put forward earlier by Mr Bevin which he had slightly modified in his proposals circulated as P.M.M. (51) 8.<sup>6</sup> These provided for a ceasefire, a renewal of the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations and the possibility of establishing Formosa as a demilitarised area. These proposals should be treated as an integrated whole. There could be no hope of

4. S.G. Holland said that he was relieved to learn that Bevin was no longer anxious to press his proposals since they would have given great offence to the U.S. T.E. Donges, the South African Minister of the Interior, said that recognition of China as part of a settlement would be extremely ill-received by the U.S.
5. The U.S.A. proposed to move in the General Assembly a resolution requesting the Collective Measures Committee to make recommendations to all States on a continuing basis with regard to collective measures in meeting the Chinese aggression.
6. Not printed.

the Chinese accepting them otherwise, and he hoped that the United States might be brought to accept them.

The United Nations had been right to resist the first aggression by the North Koreans. A different situation had, however, arisen when the United Nations forces crossed the 38th parallel northwards. The Chinese Government had given ample warning that, if this line was crossed, they would take action, and this they had done. It was by no means clear that the proper sequel now was for the United Nations to take further precipitate action which he and his colleagues at the meeting believed to be wrong....

### 32. Proposal for a Four-Power Conference<sup>1</sup>

... Mr Nehru endorsed the suggestion made by Mr Liaquat Ali Khan.<sup>2</sup> If the primary object was to bring the parties into conference, there was no point in framing resolutions assigning responsibility for past events. We were concerned now with the present and the future rather than the past. The draft 'principles' prepared by the Ceasefire Group, though they contained no condemnation of China, had proved generally acceptable to the United States Government. It could therefore be assumed that the United States Government would not insist on a resolution condemning the Peking Government; and he was sure that any attempt to include such a condemnation would prejudice the success of the proposed new approach. A further argument against an elaborate resolution was that the Peking Government were known to attach great importance to the recognition of the principle that Formosa should be treated on the basis of the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations. A detailed resolution which did not mention Formosa would not be acceptable to the Chinese; but a resolution affirming the principle of the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations regarding Formosa would not be acceptable to the United States. He concluded that the resolution should do no more than invite the four Powers to discuss outstanding

1. Minutes of the seventh meeting of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers, London, 9 January 1951. J.N. Collection. Extracts.
2. Bevin had suggested a new resolution for the General Assembly which, without branding China as an aggressor, would be "sufficiently condemnatory" of her to secure U.S. support. The resolution would also propose a conference of the U.S., the U.K., the U.S.S.R., and France with the Peking Government on all outstanding questions relating to East Asia. Liaquat Ali said that the recent military situation not being such as to make the Chinese more anxious for negotiations, the resolution should no more than invite the four Powers to meet together in conference.



issues relating to the Far East in conformity with existing international obligations and the provisions of the United Nations Charter. He did not favour the inclusion of France in the proposed conference, as the presence of French representatives would raise further problems relating to Indo-China....<sup>3</sup>

3. After Nehru's remarks, Bevin stated that he would authorise the British Ambassador in Washington and the British representative at the U.N. to ascertain the views of the U.S. and other friendly countries on a resolution on the lines favoured by the meeting. The detailed wording of the resolution would be left to the Commonwealth representatives at Lake Success.

### 33. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

Instructions sent to the U.K. Delegation last night regarding next move on Korea<sup>2</sup> represent unanimous conclusion of Commonwealth Prime Ministers. In suggestion that the proposed conference of four Powers should consider outstanding questions in the Far East in conformity with existing international obligations, words underlined are intended to meet in substance Chinese demand that Formosa should be discussed on the basis of the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations. We attach greatest importance to retention of these words in any resolution that may be moved and should like you to work for this. It is also our view that the resolution should be as short as possible so as to avoid controversy over non-essentials....

1. London, 10 January 1951. J.N. Collection. Extracts.
2. See the preceding item, footnote 3.

### 34. To C.R. Attlee<sup>1</sup>

London  
January 10, 1951

My dear Attlee,

I am writing this rather late at night. I have just seen a draft which Sir Norman Brook<sup>2</sup> has sent. This is a declaration to be issued by the

1. J.N. Collection.
2. He was Secretary of the British Cabinet, 1947-56.

Commonwealth Prime Ministers. I am afraid I do not like this draft at all. It contains some admirable sentiments which, in the context of today, do not help at all. It does not give any lead which might show the way towards a solution. It recognises and respects the leading part of the United States and thus supports the policy being pursued by the U.S. and acknowledges their leadership. It condemns or, at any rate, expresses regret, at the action that China has taken in Korea. I am unable to agree to all this as I think that the principal danger at present issues from U.S. policy in the Far East. I think that China has acted wrongly in some respects but her claims are justified. Whatever she has done, she did after full notice and warning, and it was our fault to ignore this.

It may be possible to revise this draft declaration by leaving out some passages to which objection might be taken. But, even so, the declaration would be without much point.

I have also seen the latest draft of the 'principles' which the ceasefire committee has produced. This is no great improvement on the previous draft and we know definitely that China will not accept it. Because of this, the Conference had suggested another line of approach, which was communicated to New York and Washington.

It seems to me that the Ceasefire Committee can make no further useful contribution. There is no point whatever in proceeding with these 'principles'.

The issues are simple. If we want peace in the Far East (and the world) China's claims to Formosa and the U.N. should be recognised, whatever form this might take. These claims are right in principle. Even from the practical point of view these are justified. Certainly one must not go to war on these issues, or take any step that leads to war. Also one must not condemn China as this closes the door to negotiation.

There appears to be widespread agreement about this policy. The only difficulty is the objection raised by the U.S. I recognise that this is a serious matter but I am wholly convinced that it would be a fatal error on our part not to follow what we consider to be the right policy because of the disagreement of the U.S. That would be an encouragement of trends leading to war. U.S. policy has been most disconcerting and has led to further entanglements. In a matter of the most vital importance to the world, it seems to me to be utterly wrong for us to show weakness or a lack of decision.

I think, therefore, that it is essential for us to take a firm line with the U.S. in this matter and to point out to them in all friendliness that we intend to pursue a certain policy and cannot give it up, even if unfortunately they are unable to agree. Only such a firm line can have any value, and it is highly likely that it will produce the result desired.

The Prime Ministers' Conference will end soon. We have very little time left. It would be a great pity if this Conference ended without making much



difference to the drift that is taking place now. Our discussions have been of value and we have all learnt much from them. But they tend to be vague and produce no result. Perhaps the large numbers of persons present prevents a more intimate approach. It has struck me that it might be worthwhile if only the nine Prime Ministers met for a while, more especially to consider the Far Eastern situation. Such a meeting would only be worthwhile if a clear and firm proposal could be put forward, and the right person to do so could only be you.

I put this suggestion for your consideration. I am greatly troubled at the drift of events. At the same time I feel that this can be checked if only we are determined to do so.

Please forgive me for inflicting this long letter on you. It is 1.35 a.m. on January 11th now.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### 35. The Changing Face of Asia<sup>1</sup>

...Mr Nehru said that some statement must be issued at the end of the meeting in the form of a communique or a declaration or both. A communique could be purely factual; a declaration must be something more and, if inadequate, would be better not made. It could no doubt refer to the universal desire for peace and to the desire of the Commonwealth countries to live and let live and to see the utmost cooperation possible between nations. Would this alone suffice?

One factor, whether included or not, was highly relevant—the changing face of Asia. This change had not been limited to the political or even to the economic field. There was a ferment in the minds of millions in Asia whose thinking, as it emerged, did not conform to the lines set by either of the two great parties into which the rest of the world was divided. For the masses of Asia the elementary necessities of life were the prime consideration. All else—even matters of grave import to the Western world—took second place. The psychological reaction to these changes differed in different parts of Asia. Where power had been freely transferred, opinion was on the whole favourable

1. Minutes of the eleventh meeting of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers, London, 11 January 1951. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

to the West, despite the occasional resurgence of unhappy memories. In other parts of Asia unhappy memories, and unhappy present experiences, were uppermost in men's minds and they did not see current problems, as the West did, in terms of the division between communist and anti-communist. Asian opinion was not homogeneous. China certainly, emerging as a Great Power after thirty years of revolution and war, had a mood of her own—proud, sensitive and resentful of any reflection on her new-found strength and self-respect. Though in a military sense Asia might be weak, she had great passive strength.

It was a mistake to view everything in terms of black and white: there were many fine shades of difference between. If there was to be a declaration, the emphasis should certainly be on the determination of the Commonwealth to preserve peace. But it should be made clear that a desire for peace was neither weakness nor appeasement.

### 36. Vast Changes in Asia<sup>1</sup>

The full significance of the great changes which have taken place in Asia is still not fully understood in the West. Many of the troubles in the world today—little wars and the prospect of a bigger one—arise because the Western nations do not try to think of Asian change in the long perspective of history and try to adapt themselves to it. Vast changes are taking place in the minds of millions and millions of people in the East. If this is not realised greater dangers will come.

Some people talk about war being inevitable. They should say instead that peace is inevitable. That is a much better way of putting it. A hot temper is no way of escaping from a cold war. When people go to war they often forget their objective and are carried away by a determination to crush their enemy.

It is extraordinary how little thought is given to the first steps in war, though first steps are likely to be wrong steps unless one knows what the second steps are going to be. It is also extraordinary that people, who honestly want peace, should behave in a war-like manner.

I spent the greater part of my life studying the mass mind. Today one sees in the world the extraordinary spectacle of nations passionately seeking

1. Speech at a reception by the India League, London, 11 January 1951. From the *National Herald*, 13 January 1951.



peace and yet doing things that inevitably tend towards war. In the present crisis, it is not enough to be pacifist. One must do something to try to clear the atmosphere. I am sure the right temper and the right approach to world peace will eventually succeed.

### 37. The British Attitude at the United Nations<sup>1</sup>

... Mr Nehru said that the main object of the meeting, in all its discussions on Korea and the Far East, had been to preserve peace. With this aim, they had concerted proposals which had been carefully designed to win acceptance from both the United States Government and the Peking Government, and the instructions which had been sent to New York as a result of the discussion on the previous day had been drafted with this in mind. He had, therefore, been somewhat disturbed to read the account of Sir Gladwyn Jebb's speech before the Political Committee of the United Nations, as reported in the press of 12th January.<sup>2</sup> If these reports were correct, it would seem that the United Kingdom representative had adopted a rather patronising and pedagogic attitude towards the Peking Government. In a delicate situation like the present the manner of approach was all important, and he therefore regretted that anything should have been said which might have made the Peking Government less ready to accept the proposed settlement<sup>3</sup>....

1. Minutes of the twelfth meeting of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers, London, 12 January 1951. J.N. Collection. Extracts.
2. *The Times* reported Jebb as having said that China should know that "the best way of gaining recognition and a seat in the U.N. was not to try to rush the door, beating cymbals and firing tommy-guns."
3. Bevin said that the cabled report of Jebb's speech seemed to bear out the impression that Nehru had received from the press and he would look further into the matter.

### 38. Need for a Temper of Peace<sup>1</sup>

Friends,

It is always a pleasure for me to come to England. I have many friends here, and the memory of my earlier days surrounds me. I welcome, therefore, this

1. Broadcast from the B.B.C., London, 12 January 1951.

opportunity to come here again, but the pleasure that this would have brought me has been marred somewhat by the crisis which confronts the world, and the burdens which each one of us has to bear. This makes me somewhat hesitant to talk to you. It would serve little purpose for me to repeat platitudes. To refer frankly to the matters of grave import which oppress us today is not easy for me in my present position. It would ill become of me to say anything which embarrasses friends here, and yet this very consciousness of pervasive friendliness in England emboldens me to talk to you in a manner of friends who have a common purpose in view and who wish to cooperate in achieving it.

What is that purpose? Surely today it is the avoidance of war and the maintenance of peace. Of my generation many have lived the greater part of our lives and only a few years remain to us. It matters little what happens to our generation; but it does matter a great deal what happens to hundreds of millions of others, and to the world at large. Today these hundreds of millions all over the world live under some kind of suspended sentence of death, and from day to day an atmosphere is created in people's minds of the inevitability of war. Helplessly we seem to be driven towards the abyss. More and more people in responsible positions talk in terms of passion, revenge and retaliation. They talk of security, and behave in a way which is likely to put an end to all security. They talk of peace, and think and act in terms of war.

Are we so helpless that we cannot stop this drift towards catastrophe? I am sure that we can, because vast masses of people in every country want peace. Why, then, should they be driven by forces apparently beyond their control in a contrary direction? Politicians and statesmen strive for peace through the technique of politics which consists in devising carefully worded formulae. During the last ten days the Commonwealth Prime Ministers have wrestled with this problem of world peace. All of us earnestly seek peace. I hope that our labours will help in producing the desired result. But something more is necessary than mere formulae. It is a passion for peace and for civilised behaviour in international affairs that is necessary. It is the temper of peace and not the temper of war, even though peace is casually mentioned.

It is to this temper of peace that I want especially to direct my mind and your mind. We are in the midst of an international crisis, and perhaps an even greater crisis that confronts us today is the crisis in the spirit of man. We have built up a great civilisation whose achievements are remarkable and which holds the promise of even greater achievement in the future. But while these material achievements are very great, somehow we appear to be slipping away from the very essence of civilisation. Ultimately, culture and civilisation rest in the mind and behaviour of man and not in the material evidence of it that we see around us. During war the civilising process stops and we go back



to some barbarous phase of the human mind. Are we speeding back to this barbarism of the mind?

If we desire peace, we must develop the temper of peace and try to win even those who may be suspicious of us or who we think are against us. We have to try to understand others just as we expect them to understand us. We cannot seek peace in the language of war or of threats. You will all remember the magnificent example of which both England and India have reason to be proud. Both of us, in spite of long continued struggle, approached our problems with this basic temper of peace, and we not only resolved them, but produced at the same time an abiding understanding and friendship of each other. That is a great example which we might well bear in mind whenever any other crisis in the relations of nations confronts us. That is the civilised approach to problems which leaves no ill will or bitterness behind.

I am not a pacifist. Unhappily the world of today finds that it cannot do without force. We have to protect ourselves and to prepare ourselves for any contingency. We have to meet aggression or any other kinds of evil. To surrender to evil is always bad. But in resisting evil we must not allow ourselves to be swept away by our own passions and fears and act in a manner which is itself evil. Even in resisting evil and aggression, we have always to maintain the temper of peace and hold out the hand of friendship to those who, through fear or for other reasons, may be opposed to us. That is the lesson that our great leader Mahatma Gandhi taught us and, imperfect as we are, we draw inspiration from that great teaching.

In Asia, as you know, great changes have taken place. I fear that most of us, and perhaps more particularly you of the West, do not realise the vastness of these changes. We are living through a great historic process which has created a ferment in the minds of hundreds of millions of people and which can be seen at work in political and economic changes. Asia has a very long history behind it and for long ages it played an outstanding part in the world. During the last two or three hundred years it suffered eclipse. Now it is emerging from colonial status. Inevitably this is making a great difference to the balance of forces in the world. The old equilibrium has been upset and can never come back again. That is a basic fact to remember. Asia is essentially peaceful, but it is also proud and sensitive and very conscious of its newly-won freedom. In its exuberance it may go wrong occasionally. It has mighty problems of its own and wishes to live at peace with the rest of the world, but it is no longer prepared to tolerate any domination or threat of domination, or any behaviour after the old pattern of colonialism. It demands recognition of its new position in the world. Therefore I would like you to look with understanding and sympathy on these historic changes which are taking place in Asia, for it is of the utmost importance that Europe, America and Asia as well as other parts of the world should understand each other. Nor should we

forget the millions of people who are still under colonial status in Africa and elsewhere. Outworn formulae of a past age will not help. A new approach and understanding are needed, and if these are forthcoming I feel sure that Asia will respond with all friendship. The countries of Asia need and seek friendship and cooperation, for they have tremendous problems to solve. These problems are concerned with the primary needs of their peoples—food, clothing, housing and the other necessities of life. They are too busy with these problems to desire to be entangled in international conflicts. But against their will they are dragged into them.

Great nations have arisen in Asia with long memories of the past they have lived through, and with their eyes fixed on a future of promise. India, Pakistan, Burma, Ceylon and Indonesia have recently acquired their freedom. China has taken a new shape and a new form. But, whether we like that shape and form or not, we have to recognise that a great nation has been reborn and is conscious of her new strength. China in her new-found strength has acted sometimes in a manner which I deeply regret. But we have to remember the background of China, as of other Asian countries—the long period of struggle and frustration, the insolent treatment that they have received from imperialist Powers, and the latter's refusal to deal with them in terms of equality. It is neither right nor practical to ignore the feelings of hundreds of millions of people. It is no longer safe to do so. We in India have two thousand years of friendship with China. We have differences of opinion and even small conflicts, but that long past comes up before us and something of the wisdom of that past also helps us to understand each other. And so we endeavour to maintain friendly relations with this great neighbour of ours, for the peace of Asia depends upon these relations.

The immediate problem of today is the problem of the Far East. If that is not solved satisfactorily, trouble spreads to Europe and to the rest of the world. And perhaps Europe, with her magnificent record of progress, not only in material achievements but also in the culture of the mind and spirit, will suffer most if war comes. Therefore we must come to grips with this Far Eastern problem with the firm determination to solve it. We can only do so with the temper and approach of peace and friendliness, and not by threats. The time when threats were effective is long past. No question of saving face or prestige should come in the way of this human and civilised approach to the problems of our age.

Our task is the preservation of peace and indeed of our civilisation. To this task let us bend our energies and find fellowship and strength in each other.



### 39. Cable to K.M. Panikkar<sup>1</sup>

We have kept you informed of developments. Next step rests with the Chinese Government.<sup>2</sup> I am giving you below my appraisal of situation for your personal information.

2. There is no doubt that the U.K. and all Commonwealth countries, as well as European countries, are very anxious to avoid war. At the same time they are equally anxious not to break with the United States or to drive the United States into isolation. Hence their attitude to the United States is not as forcible as it might be. My presence and talks here have helped greatly in making them realise the importance of coming to an agreement with China. The U.K., Canada and Australia practically accept our viewpoint and are fully prepared to reaffirm the Cairo Declaration about Formosa and not insisting on making ceasefire precede other steps. But, in view of strong United States opposition, they agreed to milder and somewhat ambiguous statement nevertheless, making it clear that they interpreted it in terms of the Cairo Declaration and simultaneous steps to be taken. In all this they were powerfully influenced by existing situation as well as by India's insistence. They instructed their representatives at Lake Success to make their position clear which was largely in favour of China's demands. Gladwyn Jebb's speech at Lake Success was objected to here and he has been called upon to explain.

3. The United States, as you know, is suffering from mass hysteria and even the State Department cannot ignore this. Nevertheless, they have gone far in accepting our principal contentions. Perhaps, more to put China in the wrong, in case of her rejection of new terms. The fact remains that Chinese demands have been directly or indirectly accepted and China is in strong position. The fact of inviting her to join Big Power committee is something even more than her admission into the United Nations. It is recognition of her as a Great Power. Admission to the United Nations inevitably must follow.

1. London, 15 January 1951. J.N. Collection.

2. On 13 January, the First Committee adopted the Ceasefire Group's revised 'principles' calling for an immediate agreement on ceasefire in Korea, followed by a conference of representatives including those of the U.K., the U.S.A., the U.S.S.R., and China with a view to achievement of a settlement, in conformity with existing obligations and provisions of the U.N. Charter, of East Asian problems, including those of Formosa and of the Chinese representation in the U.N. The same day, the 'principles' were forwarded to the Chinese Government, which was asked to state whether they were acceptable as a basis for consultations.

4. The United States privately stated that their acceptance of the three-man committee's 'principles' was contingent on India accepting them. We made it clear that while we accepted them we would clarify our position fully and publicly, which we have done.<sup>3</sup>

5. In view of all these circumstances it seems to me that the prospect of a hopeful settlement very largely in conformity with Chinese wishes is good, provided no false step is taken by China. Such step would be a bare rejection of the Political Committee's resolution based on 'principles'. It is therefore important to avoid this break anyhow. China could express her general agreement with this resolution but making it clear what she understood by it. This will safeguard her position completely and throw burden on other side. If once tension in the Far East relaxes, this will produce inevitable reaction on the European situation, and the problem of German rearmament,<sup>4</sup> which is explosive, will be viewed in a different light by the four-Power meeting. The whole situation will thus undergo change for the better and fear of war will recede. Once this happens improvement in situation may well be rapid. Much, therefore, depends on China's reply to the United Nations.

6. I am going to Paris for three days on 17th where I shall meet our Heads of Missions in Europe, then returning to India. I have heavy work there but if necessity arises later I would be prepared to go to Peking.

7. Millions of people all over the world are anxiously awaiting for the issue of peace or possible war to be decided. I earnestly hope that the Chinese Government will act so as to assure peace and thus remove terrible burden of fear of war from all over the world.

3. Associating himself with the 'principles' presented to the First Committee on 11 January, B.N. Rau made clear India's reservations. These included: (1) The phrase 'existing international obligations' meant for India the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations; and (2) The General Assembly resolution should provide concurrently for conference as well as ceasefire as without a ceasefire implementation of 'principles' would be impracticable.
4. Britain and France were opposed to the American suggestion that West Germany be allowed to rearm to partially offset the Soviet superiority in conventional forces over the West. On 24 October 1950, Rene Pleven, the French Prime Minister, proposed the formation of a unified European army, including German contingents, under a European defence minister as a solution of the problem of German rearmament.



#### 40. Message to C.R. Attlee<sup>1</sup>

I have seen press reports of Chinese reply to the Political Committee's proposals.<sup>2</sup> I do not consider the reply to be outright rejection. It is partly accepted, partly request for elucidation, partly counter proposal, and leaves room for further negotiation. All of us must have time to consider them before determining future line of action. According to press report, the United States have already pronounced the Chinese reply unacceptable and asked that meeting of the Political Committee be called to declare China aggressor.<sup>3</sup> Any such suggestion will shut door to negotiation completely and make war inevitable. This would be contrary to policy which you and we decided to follow in the Commonwealth Conference. I think there is room for negotiation and we should take advantage of this. I would request you strongly to urge Washington not to precipitate matters.

1. Paris, 18 January 1951. Copy in V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L. Similar messages were sent to R.G. Menzies and St Laurent.
2. Chou En-lai replied on 17 January that China could not agree to a ceasefire before negotiations as this would only give the American troops "a breathing space" and buttress "U.S. aggression", and pointed out that the "existing international obligations" were not clearly specified as the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations. He suggested settlement of the East Asian problems by a seven-Power conference to be held in China on the basis of agreement on withdrawal of foreign troops from Korea and self-determination by the Koreans of their internal affairs, and the subjects of negotiation to include the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Formosa and the legitimate status of China in the U.N.
3. On 17 January, Dean Acheson, the U.S. Secretary of State, describing the Chinese reply as complete rejection of the ceasefire proposal, said that the counter-proposals were unacceptable to the U.S. Government. The U.S. representative in the U.N. demanded in the First Committee the next day that China should be condemned as an aggressor.

#### 41. Cable to K.M. Panikkar<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram 20 dated 17th January. So far, I have seen only press reports of Chinese reply. Americans at once described it as unacceptable and are trying hard to rally adequate support for condemnatory resolution. I have requested Rau, who is going back at once to New York, to make clear to all consequences of passing such resolution and our opposition to it. I have also

1. Paris, 18 January 1951. J.N. Collection.

sent personal messages<sup>2</sup> to Attlee, St Laurent and Menzies, urging that door be not closed to further negotiation and Chinese reply be studied in this spirit. To French President, who raised question of Indo-China with me<sup>3</sup> and expressed fear of Chinese aggression there, I said that peaceful solution of Korea should be sought first and that, once China enters the U.N., all Far Eastern questions, including Indo-China, are more likely to be satisfactorily settled. You will thus see that I am working for continuation of negotiation, and for more time in which to do this.

2. In the absence of official text of the Chinese reply and your comments, I am at disadvantage in giving advice. Certain points, however, need emphasis:

- (1) 'Principles' do not constitute final resolution. Latter, when framed, should incorporate the Chinese point of view regarding Formosa. Canada, Australia, the U.K. and ourselves are committed to Formosa being discussed on the basis of the Cairo Declaration. Withdrawal of foreign troops from Korea is already included in 'principles'.
- (2) Once 'principles' are incorporated in resolution basis indicated in (1), they will constitute acceptance by the U.N. of bulk of Chinese demands. Thereafter, even if America were otherwise disposed, the remaining members of the proposed seven-Power conference<sup>4</sup> will not allow discussion of Far Eastern issues to be delayed after ceasefire.
- (3) Since return of Formosa to China must be preceded by withdrawal of American fleet, and of American forces from Formosa, all these matters are open to discussion in conference under heading proposed.

I am, therefore, of opinion already expressed that 'principles' concede substance of the Chinese demand and that all that China need do is to make clear that, as regards plan as a whole, it considers it as integrated, that ceasefire will be followed immediately by discussion of other issues, and, as regards Formosa, that she will discuss the issue on the basis of the Cairo Declaration. As for China's admission to the U.N., her participation is first step; full recognition must inevitably follow.

4. If peaceful settlement is the objective, we have to take American opinion, however unreasonable, into account to some extent, and insistence by China on acceptance of form in which her demands must be accepted must make settlement most difficult. We have done our best to press legitimate Chinese claims and shall continue to do so, but I doubt whether, apart from Indonesia and Burma, any other countries in the U.N. will continue to support

2. See the preceding item.

3. Nehru met the French President, Vincent Auriol, in Paris on 18 January.

4. The countries suggested by Chou En-lai for the conference were: China, the U.S.S.R., the U.K., the U.S.A., France, India and Egypt.



us if this chance of settlement is allowed to pass and the U.S. given wide latitude to misrepresent Chinese aims and motives.

## 42. The Solution to the Impasse<sup>1</sup>

Jawaharlal Nehru: The Chinese reply to the United Nations ceasefire proposal is essentially an attempt to pursue negotiations, not to break them off.

Question: What do you think is the solution to the impasse?

JN: By ensuring that negotiations open at the same time as the ceasefire is proclaimed.

Q: What is your opinion regarding the American request for China to be condemned as an aggressor?

JN: That would be serious. It would signify an end to negotiating and that is just the thing that must be avoided.

Q: Do you think that there is a majority in the United Nations to vote such a motion?

JN: Many do not want it because they already have diplomatic relations with Peking. But you never know: there are twenty-two South American republics. They are a long way away and have less reasons than you Europeans for fearing a spread of the conflict.

Q: Do you think that China is a satellite of Russia?

JN: She cannot be considered as a pure satellite of Russia, like Czechoslovakia, for example. China is too big, too far away, too Chinese.

Q: What are the prospects for the settlement of the Indo-Chinese problem?

JN: If the Korean affair is settled, the door is open for a settlement in Indo-China. If there is no settlement in Korea there will be no settlement in Indo-China.

1. Interview to *France-Tireur*, Paris, 19 January 1951.

43. Cable to K.M. Panikkar<sup>1</sup>

I have just received message from St Laurent<sup>2</sup> in which he asks for clarification of Chinese reply on the following points. Reference is to paragraphs as numbered in that reply.

- (a) Paragraph 1—Does “withdrawal of all foreign troops from Korea” include Chinese ‘volunteers’? Our understanding is that not only American and other U.N. troops now in Korea but Chinese ‘volunteers’ will also be withdrawn.
- (b) Paragraph 2—Is it Chinese intention that negotiations on broad political questions at issue should precede a ceasefire or would they be satisfied with negotiations for ceasefire to be followed by negotiations on political issues as soon as terms of ceasefire have been agreed upon? The ceasefire committee have already made it clear through General Wu that conditions for a ceasefire would have to be fully discussed and agreed before ceasefire would actually become effective. As I pointed out in my telegram No. 13,<sup>3</sup> once ‘principles’ have been agreed upon in conformity with the Chinese stand that future of Formosa should be discussed on the basis of the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations—St Laurent accepts this position—substance of Chinese demand would have been accepted. There would, therefore, be no real risk of “endless discussions without solving any problem”, following upon ceasefire, which the Chinese fear.
- (c) Paragraph 3 of the Chinese proposals states, *inter alia*, that “rightful place of the Central People’s Government in the United Nations should be established as from beginning of seven-Power conference.” St Laurent points out that the proposed seven-Power conference would itself necessarily imply *de facto* recognition which, unless conference became abortive, would have to be followed by formal recognition. This is what I have said all along.

You will note from foregoing that Canada shares our desire to follow path of negotiations and is working hard for this. I have expressed my appreciation of this in my reply<sup>4</sup> and again urged him to prevent the U.S.

1. Paris, 19 January 1951. Copy in V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L. Extracts.  
 2. He was at this time in Paris.  
 3. See *ante*, pp. 478-480.  
 4. Not printed.



proceeding with its contemplated condemnatory resolution. St Laurent wishes you to get answer to his queries from Chou En-lai. Please arrange to see him urgently and tell him that I consider Canadian attitude helpful and ask him for elucidation of points raised....

#### 44. Message to C.R. Attlee<sup>1</sup>

Your message,<sup>2</sup> in reply to mine of the 18th, has just reached me through your Ambassador. I have asked Krishna Menon to see you on Monday to explain my view of situation and hope you can spare him necessary time.

There is much in the tone of the Chinese reply to cause the kind of reaction that you have expressed. The latest messages from our Ambassador in Peking, however, confirm my impression that the Chinese desire settlement through negotiation. Chou En-lai laid great stress on negotiations to our Ambassador and told him that his proposals were in the nature of suggestions.<sup>3</sup> I do not think the venue of negotiations need cause any trouble. The substance of the Chinese reply is not so far apart from 'principles' set by the Political Committee as the language of the reply might suggest. I think it is definitely possible to bridge the gulf.

St Laurent asked me yesterday to obtain elucidation of certain points in the Chinese reply and I telegraphed to our Ambassador immediately to see Chou En-lai and obtain these. I am glad that you also feel that we should take advantage of every possibility for negotiation. In a message that I have sent to Peking this morning, I have emphasised that the Chinese Government, having obtained substance of their demands, should respond in a friendly manner to approaches made to them, and that any step which appears to humiliate the U.N. should be avoided.<sup>4</sup> But I do feel that introduction in the Political Committee of any resolution of condemnatory character, even though limited to Korea, will almost certainly bolt door to negotiation.<sup>5</sup> I would, therefore,

1. Paris, 20 January 1951. J.N. Collection.
2. Attlee stated that he had been profoundly disappointed by the Chinese reply which he thought was unrealistic and contemptuous, particularly with regard to the suggestion about the venue of the proposed conference.
3. Panikkar reported after his meeting with Chou En-lai that China would welcome negotiations to settle preliminaries of conference, including agenda and venue.
4. The telegram to Panikkar has not been printed.
5. Attlee said Britain considered it premature to table any resolution in the U.N., "but if there is to be one then we would prefer to see it confined to the context of Korea."

urge that this must be avoided and every effort should continue to be made to obtain negotiated settlement.<sup>6</sup>

6. Krishna Menon, who met Attlee on 22 January, reported that he had "conveyed to him the full import of your direction to me and particularly mentioned what you said about our friendly attitude to the United States."

#### 45. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

I feel strongly that there are still fair possibilities for negotiation and subsequent settlement of the Korean problem. Recent messages from Panikkar indicate that the Chinese Government is anxious for negotiations and proposals put forward by them were in the nature of suggestions to be discussed. They are, however, still deeply suspicious of American intentions, but are eager to find some way out. The U.K., France and Canada are anxious for settlement. I have forwarded to Panikkar some questions for elucidation from St Laurent. It is most important that nothing should be done to prevent further progress towards negotiation. You must make it perfectly clear that you will oppose any move to condemn China and if any such resolution is proposed you must vote against it.

I am anxious that our position should be explained to the U.S. We realise fully their difficulties and do not wish anything to be done which might humiliate the U.S. or the U.N. I have pointed this out to Panikkar. In spite of difference of opinion on this issue we want to be as friendly as possible to the U.S. and to cooperate with them; but we are convinced that there is room for negotiation and settlement still and our attempts to that end must continue.

1. Paris, 20 January 1951. J.N. Collection.

#### 46. Door Open to Negotiated Settlement<sup>1</sup>

Jawaharlal Nehru: I have had the privilege of meeting the President of the Republic and of discussing the critical international situation with the Prime

1. Statement and remarks at a press conference at Paris before leaving for New Delhi, 20 January 1951. From the *National Herald*, 21 January 1951.



Minister and the Foreign Minister of France.<sup>2</sup> I am convinced that the French Government earnestly desire peace both in the Far East and the world and will do everything in their power to further it.

For my part I feel that the way to a negotiated settlement in regard to Korea and Formosa is open and there is no reason why we should not take advantage of it. It is wrong to say that the door to negotiation has been closed. I know that the parties concerned desire peace and a settlement by negotiation. Every effort should therefore be made to bring about such negotiation. Where there are doubts, these can be removed by clarification and elucidation. But any step that comes in the way of negotiation must be avoided. Every country and every responsible individual must, at this critical juncture, act with restraint. The risks and dangers are great and the consequences of hasty action are terrible to contemplate.

I am deeply grateful to the French Government and the many friends I have here for their hospitality and the friendship and understanding they have shown. I leave this beautiful and gracious city, which has for so long been a symbol of human liberty and culture, with regret.

Question: Is there any desire for a negotiated settlement on China's side?

JN: I am quite clear in my mind that there is a desire for negotiation and settlement on China's side. It is true that the tone of their reply is not helpful; nevertheless, if you examine that tone with previous replies, it is much different. Apart from the tone, if you examine the content carefully, the gap between what was proposed by the Political Committee of the United Nations and the Chinese Government's reply is not very great. This should be considered as suggestions for further discussion and elucidation.

Because of all this I feel we must pursue this line of negotiation and we cannot do so helpfully if at the same time we start condemning China. The two don't go together. One must exhaust the possibilities of negotiation. I still think that such negotiations will lead to positive results. Our Ambassador is in continuous touch with the Chinese Government and is seeking some clarification.

Q: Do you plan to go to China or Moscow?

JN: I have no plans to go anywhere except to New Delhi.

Q: Is there any hope of negotiation?

2. Nehru conferred with Vincent Auriol, Rene Pleven, Robert Schuman, the Foreign Minister, and other members of the French Government during his three-day visit to France.

JN: There is still plenty of room for negotiation.

Q: Will you please tell something about your discussions with the French leaders.

JN: I found much in common with the French. We are agreed we must do everything in our power to avoid war. We agreed that everything should be done for the preservation of peace and no hasty action taken which might endanger peace.

I came at a very critical time and I think my visit has done good, at least for me.

## 47. Avoiding Hasty Action<sup>1</sup>

Question: Do you think that another world war is inevitable?

Jawaharlal Nehru: There is still a fair chance of a negotiated settlement.

Q: Do you regard China as an aggressor?

JN: It is not as simple as that. There has been aggression in Korea, but the Chinese Government took no action at all until the 38th parallel had been crossed. They told us very frankly that they would consider this a threat to their security in Manchuria. Remember that all invasions of China have taken place through Korea and the Chinese were concerned about their big industries in the north.

If you are trying for a negotiated settlement, you must exhaust all possibilities of negotiation and not take hasty action. I certainly think that it is possible to reach an agreement. The language of the Chinese Government's reply is rather hard, but the substance of the reply shows a good deal of room for agreement. It also makes a number of suggestions which should be discussed. My own impression from such information as we possess is that the Chinese Government would be glad to negotiate and come to a settlement.

1. Interview to the press, Rome, 20 January 1951. From the *National Herald*, 21 January 1951. Nehru stopped in Rome for an hour on his way back to India.



Q: Do other Commonwealth nations share your impressions of the Chinese Government's attitude?

JN: I cannot say whether the other nations of the Commonwealth share our impressions of the Chinese Government's attitude. But we are the only Commonwealth nation to be represented by an Ambassador in Peking and so we have more information.

Q: Do you think that the unity of the Commonwealth can be maintained in case of world war?

JN: The first thing is to prevent a difficult situation arising. If it does and there is world war, all countries including those of Asia will be face to face with disaster. So we must try to avoid war.

#### 48. Feasibility of Negotiations<sup>1</sup>

Jawaharlal Nehru: My visit to London has done me good from all angles. I am glad to be back home to devote my time to the serious and important problems of the country which after all are our primary concern. Nevertheless the international situation is such that the difficulties of other countries and their internal problems have a bearing on the future. I am glad that this two and a half weeks' stay abroad helped me to understand the world situation better, to have talks with the statesmen of other countries and also to a certain extent to understand the common man there.

So my visit has done good in educating me. Whether it did any good to others I cannot judge, but it is a fact that owing to a variety of causes India has been placed in a special position in international affairs which, I admit, is important and which has influenced larger policies to some extent. This is not obviously due to our military or economic strength but rather to our special position in this part of the world and to our approach of peace to all world problems.

There are many intricate and difficult problems in international sphere at present, but far more important is the situation in the Far East. What happens in the Far East will naturally affect the European situation and other situations.

1. Press conference, Bombay, 21 January 1951. From the *National Herald*, *The Hindustan Times*, *The Hindu* and the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 22 January 1951.

At the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference we discussed these matters fully and frankly. The statement of decisions by the Conference at the end of its sessions represents the common approach of all those present there to the Far Eastern and other problems. It will be noticed that there was a great measure of unanimity over these vital matters. Indeed, I was happy to find that in regard to many matters the approach was similar and all of us were anxious to avoid the terrible tragedy of a war and were determined to seek every way to prevent this.

Normally international affairs are conducted by what may be called political manoeuvres between nations. The situation today, however, is something far deeper and more serious than anything that can be dealt with by old-fashioned approaches. We are not playing some kind of political game or chess. We have to face the challenge to our civilisation, culture and almost everything we stand for. Therefore, it is important that not only statesmen and politicians but other people should understand it and help in dealing with it so that peace might be assured.

I found everywhere in Europe fear of war and an overmastering desire for peace to be maintained. During the last two weeks India has played her little part for peace. Because India has always stood for a peaceful approach to every solution, many people looked towards us and hoped that our efforts might succeed. Of course, there is no question of India doing much; she cannot dictate to any world Power, but her appeal for a temper of peace in the present world situation has been appreciated. In fact, all reasonable, thinking persons everywhere are trying to act wisely and with restraint.

Question: Do you consider the Chinese reply to the proposals of the United Nations Political Committee as a rejection?

JN: The Chinese reply has often been described as a rejection but I think it is wholly incorrect to say so. It is true that the language used is harsh in places, but the substance of the reply is not so far removed from the 'principles' underlying the U.N. proposals. As to where the conference should be held and how many nations should participate in it are minor matters which can be easily settled.

The principal points at issue were covered by the 'principles' of the resolution. The question of Formosa has been included and it is further laid down that this and other problems will be considered in terms of international obligations. This is a clear reference to the Cairo Declaration. Then there is the question of withdrawal of foreign forces from Korea. This too is included in 'principles' and only the timing and feasibility would have to be discussed.

Much argument has been raised whether ceasefire should precede some other decisions or follow it. That again surely is not a vital stumbling block if



a general agreement is reached. So long as the approach is agreed to I do not myself see why we should consider the Chinese reply as something entirely different from the original 'principles'.

Anyway, all these are suggestions which should be considered by the parties concerned. And it would be unwise in the extreme not to proceed to such considerations and to consider that the door has been finally shut. My own inclination is that the Chinese Government would welcome negotiations leading to a settlement. And I am sure that other countries feel that way also. Somehow in the excitement of the moment we are losing the grip of the situation. This must be avoided, and we must not think of taking any step which comes in the way of negotiations.

Q: Has the viewpoint of the Government of India on the reported U.S. move in the General Assembly naming China as an aggressor in Korea<sup>2</sup> been communicated?

JN: We are certainly putting our viewpoint to all governments. I do not want to adopt a flamboyant attitude, knowing our limitations, though, in the ultimate analysis, people of conviction count.

Apart from any particular approach that might or might not be made, I stressed in London the temper of the approach. What is important is the temper of peace and friendly approach. It does not mean to give in. Mahatma Gandhi believed in a friendly approach even to his opponent, but he did not give in on points of principle. What is most disturbing is the absence of a peaceful approach today. It is important to get it back as far as possible in our international negotiations.

It is our desire to be friendly with all countries on honourable terms. At the same time, we try to follow policies which are good for our nation and for the world. India's policy is clear enough and normally hypothetical questions are not dealt with in the declaration of policies.

For the present any condemnation of China or any other country at Lake Success worsens the situation greatly and, therefore, we are against it.

Q: Does the failure to reach a final settlement on Kashmir after repeated attempts at peaceful solution amount to tacit acceptance of partition in action?

2. On 20 January, the U.S.A. introduced in the First Committee a draft resolution which, while taking note of Chinese aggression and affirming U.N. determination to meet it, suggested consideration by the Collective Measures Committee of additional action against the aggression, and formation of a three-member good offices committee to work for achievement of U.N. objectives in Korea by peaceful means.

JN: So long as nothing else happens it amounts to tacit acceptance of the present position.

Q: Do you agree with the comparison by *The New York Times* between Kashmir and Korea, that while India settled the ceasefire proposal in Kashmir separately, she supported the Chinese viewpoint that the ceasefire and withdrawal of foreign troops and other issues were interrelated problems?

JN: India's stand is quite justified. In Kashmir the issue was straight and simple, whereas in Korea, it was complicated. In Korea all the problems that had come up for settlement were interconnected and could not be separated as they could in the case of Kashmir. In Kashmir the ceasefire line could be dissociated and dealt with as a separate problem, while in Korea this was not possible.

Q: Is there any threat of war from Pakistan on the Kashmir issue?

JN: I don't think there is a threat of war from Pakistan. In fact, Mr Liaquat Ali Khan wrote to me in his last letter that he could not think of war between India and Pakistan. However, propaganda to this effect has been carried on in the Pakistan press.

Q: How do you view the prospect of rearmament of Germany and Japan.

JN: The whole position of rearmament is rather odd for, if it is carried through, it more or less increases the atmosphere of war. Rearmament is itself a threat and its final effect is an invitation to war.

However, this does not mean that a country should have such weak defences as to invite aggression. We decided upon the policy of reducing the strength of the Indian Army after the fullest thought to the security of the country. Of course this does not apply to the Navy and the Air Force which are far too small at present to call for any reduction. If there is any internal trouble, India has adequate police strength to deal with the situation.

Q: Would not a twenty-five per cent cut in the quantum of food rations in India<sup>3</sup> probably affect the productive capacity of labour in some cases?

JN: That possibility is there. There are, however, some basic factors about it which have to be borne in mind. It is upto the Government and the people to

3. On 19 January 1951, the Government announced a uniform reduction by 25 per cent (9 ounces per adult) in food rations throughout the country.



supply maximum food, but the difficulty arises when there are not sufficient foodgrains and inevitably this difficulty will have to be shared and spread out. There is no other way.

Supposing war comes unfortunately, it will prevent us from getting food supplies from abroad. What are we to do then? We have to spread out our deficit. There is no helping it. Special attention should, of course, be paid to those who deserve a larger quantum of foodgrains and the Government will consider this matter.<sup>4</sup>

Q: Don't you think the increase in the prices of textiles and the proposed increase in the prices of foodgrains will accentuate the inflationary spiral?

JN: That is perfectly true, but I cannot answer now. What has happened in the whole world today is chiefly due to the war atmosphere. Raw materials are becoming more and more scarce because they are being hunted for by other countries for their war industries. That is bound to lead to inflation not only in those countries but in other countries also. Quite apart, however, from war coming or not coming, living in expectation of war and directing all energies to war production is harmful. It ultimately results in the lowering of the standards which are gradually built up.

4. The reduction in the rations of heavy manual workers was restored from 19 February 1951.

#### 49. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

Your telegrams 37 and 39. Panikkar has handed St Laurent's questions to the Chinese Foreign Office who have promised early reply.

Revival of the second Asian resolution at this stage does not seem desirable. This might confuse issues still further. We suggest that the Asian Powers might pass a resolution to the effect that in view of Chinese reply to the Political Committee's resolution containing 'principles', further elucidation and clarification are necessary and negotiations for this purpose should be carried on. Such negotiations could be conducted at a suitable place by representatives of seven Powers mentioned in the Chinese reply or by any other suitable

1. New Delhi, 22 January 1951. J.N. Collection.

method. In view of necessity for further negotiations, it is undesirable to pass any resolution of condemnation at this stage.

The U.S. resolution must, of course, be opposed and voted against. Even U.K.'s proposal merely to condemn China<sup>2</sup> is objectionable and should be opposed. It seems wholly improper to us to condemn China when we are asking them for clarification and trying to bring about negotiation.

2. The U.K. had suggested that the clause about action by the Collective Measures Committee might be delinked from the U.S. resolution as more specific proposals by an *ad hoc* committee comprising countries participating in U.N. action in Korea could be presented later.

## 50. Message to Chou En-lai<sup>1</sup>

1. I have just come back from Europe after spending some days at the Commonwealth Conference in London and later a few days in Paris. In both places I had occasion to meet Ministers and other important and responsible persons and representatives of various countries and discuss the Far Eastern and the world situation with them. I feel that I must share my thoughts with President Mao Tse-tung and you and I am taking the liberty of sending this personal message as between friends.

2. I found among all classes of people that I met an overwhelming desire for peace. At the same time there was widespread fear of war and its consequences and this fear led them to think of rearmament in order to protect themselves if war actually came. This was a vicious circle from which they wanted to get out if they could find an honourable way to do so and they were anxious to find a way by negotiation for settlement not only of the Far Eastern problem but also of many other international problems.

3. There was everywhere a recognition of the new role of Asia in world affairs and, more particularly, of the emergence of the new China as a Great Power. There was an increasing desire, even among many countries that have

1. New Delhi, 23 January 1951. J.N. Collection. Paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 of this message were communicated to C.R. Attlee.



so far not had diplomatic relations with China, to have such relations with her, if an opportunity offered itself. It was recognised that colonialism in Asia was dead and even the remnants of it were bound to disappear soon. In spite of this, fear of a coming war made them hesitate to take many steps which they might otherwise have taken.

4. I have followed closely the various messages which I have received through our Ambassador in Peking and I am convinced that the People's Government of China is earnestly desirous of peace and therefore eager to have negotiations in order to reach a settlement. Indeed no responsible people can possibly desire war, for such a war is likely to become world-wide and bring infinite ruin to all peoples and countries. Whether victory comes or defeat to any party, there will be a common disaster for mankind and our hopes of progress and of building a new order in society will be dashed to pieces. We have therefore tried our utmost to work for peace and I believe that our efforts have not thus far been in vain.

5. I know that there are still some people in the world who talk and behave aggressively and who perhaps have ambitious designs. With our past experience of colonial Powers in India and China, we are naturally suspicious and resentful when people talk in the old way and forget that they are addressing a new Asia. Yet I feel that this new Asia has a special duty cast upon her and ought not allow herself to be pushed into wrong courses by the folly or the ambition of others. If we are to pursue our destiny, we should retain the initiative for peace and not be diverted from it by the behaviour of others. The occasion demands the highest statesmanship which, by its vision and generosity, will upset the forces making for war and give to Asia not only peace and strength but also a moral leadership. The new China is in a position today to give such a far-seeing and generous lead for peace, which can result in an immediate removal of tension and fear from the world. Her position is in fact fully recognised by most countries. Her main objectives have been either openly or tacitly admitted. In these circumstances, arguments about forms of words have little significance when the reality has been gained. Nor is it wise to try to humiliate other countries. We in India and China have suffered enough humiliation in the past and have resented it and fought against it. We should follow a different course and try to secure a stable peace through a peaceful and cooperative approach. This would be no sign of weakness but of strength and confidence in ourselves.

6. I am venturing to address you frankly because I know you will not misunderstand. It is my desire that China and India should have close and friendly relations and should cooperate for peace and progress in Asia and the world. I think it is possible to avert the horrors of war. The world is waiting for a lead and will respond to every generous gesture. There is no risk involved and no possible harm can come from it. Only good can result.

7. I would therefore venture to suggest that your Government might announce its firm desire to have peace and to work to that end and for this purpose to have immediate negotiations for a settlement. Details have been discussed already sufficiently and an adequate basis found for such negotiations. Where there is some difference still this need not be stressed, as it is, in the larger context of things, of minor importance. A firm and friendly gesture by China at this stage would redound to her credit all over the world and will strengthen her. I earnestly trust that President Mao Tse-tung and you will appreciate the spirit in which I have made these suggestions.

## 51. Cable to K.M. Panikkar<sup>1</sup>

....In giving this message,<sup>2</sup> you will no doubt underline its significance and elucidate the various points referred to. Practically speaking, the Western Powers have gone very far in accepting the Chinese demands. Even America is largely committed to most of them by her acceptance of the Political Committee's resolution on 'principles'. It is true that the U.S. have not explicitly accepted some propositions. But that is a small matter and is largely due to prestige and domestic conditions. It is bad politics at any time to try to humiliate even an enemy. To do so at the cost of war would be tragedy. Passions and fears have been roused and we should try to meet them as far as possible and certainly not to add to them.

The main stumbling block appears to be ceasefire. I can understand the Chinese fear that a ceasefire might adversely affect the military situation. But in effect this cannot happen to any extent. Americans already have very large air and naval forces. There is going to be and can be no addition to them. There is very little chance of their being able to send additional land forces. Therefore there is practically no chance of advantage being taken of a ceasefire. The actual declaration of a ceasefire plus negotiations will change the whole atmosphere in the Far East and the world. I would hope, therefore, that the Chinese Government, instead of lengthy argument, will agree to the kind of generous gesture that I have suggested. That will be the very best answer to the aggressive resolutions and speeches now being considered at Lake Success.

1. New Delhi, 23 January 1951. J.N. Collection. Extracts.
2. To Chou En-lai. See the preceding item.



## 52. Cable to Vijayalakshmi Pandit<sup>1</sup>

...I should like you to assure Acheson that we have every goodwill for the United States and wish to cooperate in the largest measure with it, but after most earnest consideration we have come to the conclusion that there is sufficient reason for negotiation leading to peaceful and honourable settlement. We have, therefore, pressed for this. We feel that naming China as aggressor must inevitably lead to more extensive war in the Far East, and later elsewhere, which will be terrible and unpredictable. Passing of the aggressor resolution by the U.N. will also weaken the United Nations. We earnestly hope therefore that the United States will not press this resolution and, in altered circumstances resulting from Chinese reply<sup>2</sup> and Panikkar's clarification of it, support proposal for immediate conference to negotiate.

You can show him appropriate extracts from my message to Chou En-lai and Panikkar's clarification and point out to him our continuous effort to press China to tone down her demands and cooperate with other Powers for peace. This effort has met with considerable success and given us opportunity to change trend of events. The United States is at present the leading nation of the world and is devoted to peace. Generous gesture from America at this stage would add to her great prestige and bring relief to the entire world.

1. New Delhi, 24 January 1951. J.N. Collection. Extracts.
2. Replying to St Laurent's questions, China stated that she would assume the responsibility to advise Chinese 'volunteers' to return to China if the principle about withdrawal of all foreign troops from Korea was accepted. A ceasefire for a limited period could be agreed upon at the first meeting of the seven-Power conference proposed by China and put into effect, and thereafter conditions to conclude the war be discussed in relation to the political problem. It added that the legitimate status of China in the U.N. must be ensured.

## 53. An Opportunity for Peace<sup>1</sup>

Friends and Comrades,

As you know, I have just come back from Europe after spending nearly three weeks in London, Paris and elsewhere. It was difficult for me to leave India

1. Broadcast to the nation, New Delhi, 24 January 1951. A.I.R. tapes, N.M.M.L.

when so many problems demand our attention here. But I am glad that I went, and I think that, perhaps, my visit has done some good. I was in Europe at a critical time when the issues of war and peace hung in the balance. I endeavoured to throw the whole weight of our country on the side of peace and a negotiated settlement of the conflict in the Far East.

On my return I have had good news and bad. The first news that I received filled me with sorrow. This was about the death of that grand old man, Thakkar Bapa,<sup>2</sup> than whom no one has been more devoted to the cause of our backward and under-privileged brothers and sisters, more especially the tribal folk.

Another piece of news, which I had heard previously, related to the settlement in Nepal.<sup>3</sup> It is easy to criticise this, as it is easy to criticise any step, but I am convinced that it was a statesman-like act for all concerned to come to this agreement which marks the beginning of a new era in the history of our sister country. There will be many difficulties ahead and a multitude of problems, but if the people of Nepal and their representatives seek, with singleness of purpose, the good of their country and cooperate with each other in this great task, I am sure that success will come to them. The immediate task is for peace and order to be established and for the proposed interim government to take charge of the administration of the country. Nepal is independent and we value her independence. But she is also in the closest touch with India and, therefore, we have especially welcomed the big step towards democracy that has been decided upon there and is in process of being taken.

Perhaps our biggest problem at present is that of food, or rather the scarcity of it. There is naturally much apprehension and some suffering because of this. As you know, we have tried our utmost to secure food from abroad, and we hope that our efforts will succeed. Meanwhile, we have to share such food as we have and this involves a tightening of the belt for all of us. Let each person remember that he is the sharer in a common burden. Let each person also remember that he should not have more than his share, for this can only result in others having less than their share.

I am speaking to you almost on the eve of the first anniversary of the establishment of our Republic. We have passed through a difficult year, both nationally and internationally, and our difficulties continue. It has been a year of some achievement and some lack of it, of many disasters and sorrows, and of continuing international tension. We are not the only country which has had to face these heavy burdens. For the world is sick today, and no country and no sensitive person can be healthy when all around we see this sorrow and sickness. We have no magic remedies for the world's ills or our own.

2. A.V. Thakkar died on 19 January 1951.

3. See *ante*, Section 12.



The only remedy is to try to understand the disease and to work hard together to find remedies. The crisis of the world demands that we forget our petty differences and stand shoulder to shoulder in the service of our country and of humanity. Within a few days the All India Congress Committee will be meeting in Ahmedabad and a special duty is cast upon those soldiers of freedom who will meet again in that city which was hallowed by the presence of Gandhiji. Let us meet there, as elsewhere, in a spirit of reverent service, with the desire to sink our differences, and cooperate together in the great tasks that have fallen to our lot.

Great and complex as our internal problems are, they are overshadowed for the moment by the crisis in international affairs, for the future of our country, as of every other country, will depend on how we deal with this crisis and what the outcome of it is. If we cannot solve it peacefully and the world drifts towards war, then, indeed, our generation will have miserably failed, and it will pay to the utmost limit for that failure. There are no half-way houses left for us; we can either work whole-heartedly and with all the strength in us to prevent this awful calamity of world war or we allow the world to sink into an abyss. Let no man think that any good to him or to his country is going to come out of any war which will convulse the world. That will not only bring infinite destruction in its train but will also corrupt the souls of those who survive. We are thus facing a great challenge to our civilisation and to such culture as we may possess. How are we going to answer this challenge?

As I speak to you, sharp debates are going on at Lake Success on this very issue and earnest men are arguing with each other as to what should be done. I have no doubt that all of them as well as all of the countries they represent desire to avoid war, for no person can deliberately seek it, knowing what it means. And yet, in the passion of the moment, many things are said and done which may lead to that very war that we all seek to avoid. We have, therefore, to be clear in our minds and firm in our purpose and must not be swept away by any gusts of passion or prejudice, for a great responsibility rests on all of us, and more especially on those occupying positions of responsibility.

The most urgent problem of today is that of the Far East where a brutal war has waged for many months in Korea and innumerable innocent lives have been sacrificed. It is true, I think, that there was aggression there, but it is also true that none of us are wholly free from blame. For the past year or more, we persistently urged that the new China should be given a place in the councils of the world at Lake Success. Yet this was not done, and most people realise now that the fate of the world might well have been different if that obvious fact had been recognised. There has been reluctance and hesitation to accept the great changes that have come over Asia. There is still an attempt,

sometimes, to treat the great nations of Asia in the old way. But the major fact of the age is the emergence of this new Asia, and this has upset the old equilibrium and balance of power. This must be recognised, if we are to deal realistically with the world of today. Because the United Nations did not recognise it, difficulties arose and continue to trouble us.

Again there was the question of crossing the 38th parallel in Korea. Adequate notice and warning was given, but it was not heeded, and further complications ensued. Can we not say now, wiser after the event, that this was a major error, which should have been avoided?

It serves little purpose to go back to past history except to learn from it for the future. We have to deal now with this present and the future, and sometimes it appears that we have failed to learn these lessons of the past. A proposal has been made in the United Nations to name China an aggressor and it is possibly being discussed today. This proposal cannot lead to peace. It can only lead to an intensification of conflicts and it might, perhaps, close the door to any attempt at solution by negotiation. It is a tremendous responsibility for any persons to take such a step. At no time should this door be closed, for if we close it, we also close the door to a civilized approach to any problem.

I have been intimately concerned with recent developments and I have closely followed them. I am convinced that there is an overwhelming desire for peace all over the world, whether in the East or the West. My visit to Western countries has convinced me of this. The information I have received from our Ambassador in Peking has also convinced me that the People's Government of China is eager to have negotiations for a settlement of the Korean and other problems of the Far East. Their reply to the resolutions of the Political Committee of the United Nations, embodying certain 'principles', was considered by some people as a rejection of those 'principles'. After the closest scrutiny, I was totally unable to understand this criticism. That reply was a partial acceptance of those 'principles' and certain further suggestions were made which were obviously meant to be discussed. Subsequent to this, further clarification has come from the Chinese Government and this has made it even more clear that they are desirous of negotiations for peace in the Far East. It is easy to argue about words and phrases and such argument can continue indefinitely. But the occasion demands the highest statesmanship and an approach to these vital problems in a temper of peace and of friendliness. It is clear to me that enough has been said on both sides for negotiation in conference to be the next fruitful step. The time has come therefore for representatives of the Powers concerned to meet together and discuss these problems instead of talking at each other across thousands of miles.

If the problem of the Far East is tackled with success, this will itself remove the great tension that exists today all over the world, and it will be



easier to deal with other problems of Asia and Europe. We have thus the great opportunity today of turning the tide of events not only away from war but in the direction of an enduring peace.

I would appeal to the great nations of the West, who are the repositories of that magnificent culture which we have admired, and whose astonishing scientific and technical achievements have opened out a new era for mankind, to enter this door of opportunity in search of peace. To the nations of Asia, I can speak perhaps in an even more intimate language and express the fervent hope that they will stand by the methods of peace, whatever happens. *Jai Hind.*

#### 54. Cable to K.M. Panikkar<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram No. 43, dated 27th January.

As you are aware, I have been urging both the U.K. and Canada to agree to seven-Power conference without further preliminary correspondence or discussion. American pressure, however, has prevailed, and condemnatory resolution in some form or other is likely to be carried. Rau has been instructed to oppose this resolution as also Pearson's revised proposal.<sup>2</sup> He has also been instructed not to associate himself with the revived committee of three (Entezam, Pearson and one other) for which American resolution provides in order to explore further possibilities of negotiated settlement. We can only watch developments now and seize opportunity for reopening negotiations if and when this occurs. Circumstances clearly make it undesirable for us to press Chou En-lai further.

1. New Delhi, 28 January 1951. J.N. Collection.

2. On 26 January, Pearson suggested calling, within a week, a seven-Power conference either at Lake Success or New Delhi and which, after establishing a ceasefire committee comprising representatives of the U.S., China and UNCOK and completing ceasefire arrangements, would first discuss a solution of the Korean problem and the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Korea, and then the East Asian problem generally with priority to the question of China's admission to the U.N. This plan would be submitted to Peking and a reply requested within 48 hours.

## 55. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

As at New Delhi  
January 28, 1951

My dear Dickie,

... I am afraid that the U.S.A. has proved too obstinate and strong for most countries. Probably tonight or tomorrow the First Committee of the U.N. will pass their aggressor resolution. I think this is most unfortunate and entirely uncalled for in the circumstances. It can only lead to an end of any kind of negotiations. And this at a time when the gap between the two viewpoints seemed to be very narrow.

I agree with you that my visit to London, and subsequently to Paris, did some good. My later messages to various Governments, including Peking, also had some effect. I think it was largely due to my messages that Peking became more and more amenable to reason. From their point of view, they went far. I have no doubt that they wanted and want negotiations and a settlement. There was not very much difference left between the First Committee's resolution about 'principles' and what the Peking Government said. The U.K., Canada, etc., expressed appreciation of the accommodating attitude of Peking, though perhaps they were not fully satisfied. But, meanwhile, the U.S.A. had swung back completely and announced repeatedly that they would have no truck at all with China. They brought all their heavy guns to play and made it clear to the world that they would go ahead with their aggressor resolution in the U.N., single-handed, if necessary. This apparently has had its effect, and Canada, which expressed itself pleased with the later Chinese attitude, is now almost fully supporting the U.S. resolution. So also France. The U.K. made some minor reservations, but, on the whole, is adopting the same policy. All this seems to me very unfortunate. Still, I think that the happenings of recent weeks have toned down somewhat the tension that previously existed, but the outlook continues to be bad.

... I am writing this from Ahmedabad where I have come for a meeting of the All India Congress Committee. All kinds of problems overwhelm us, the most difficult of them being that of food.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.



## 56. To V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

As from New Delhi  
Camp Ahmedabad  
January 31, 1951

My dear Krishna,

... The A.I.C.C. meeting has ended. They passed the resolution<sup>2</sup> I put before them, but I did not like the atmosphere of the meeting at all and it has left a bad taste in my mouth. I am returning tomorrow morning to Delhi.

This afternoon we had news of the aggressor resolution being passed by the Political Committee<sup>3</sup> at Lake Success. All our efforts to induce the U.K., Canada, etc., failed in the end before the big stick of the U.S.A. Well, we have the satisfaction of having done our job. The future will have to look after itself....

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

1. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L. Extracts.
2. See *ante*, pp. 115-116.
3. The U.S. resolution (see *ante*, p. 488) was adopted on 30 January by 44 votes to 7 with 8 abstentions after a Lebanese amendment seeking deferment of possible sanctions if the Good Offices Committee reported satisfactory progress in its efforts was incorporated. India and Burma, along with the U.S.S.R. and the East European countries, voted against the resolution. Earlier the twelve-Power resolution, which had been revised to provide for a seven-Power conference to first agree upon an appropriate ceasefire arrangement and proceed with further deliberations only after its implementation, was defeated by a large vote.

## 57. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

... It is clear that the United States are determined to keep Formosa and are likely soon to interfere in Indo-China. Attlee's speech<sup>2</sup> reported today is not good.

1. New Delhi, 2 February 1951, V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L. Extracts.
2. Attlee told the House of Commons on 1 February that the amended American resolution adopted by the First Committee on 30 January offered the best move in existing circumstances of obtaining a negotiated settlement with China.

58. To K.M. Panikkar<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 2, 1951

My dear Panikkar,

I have received your letter of the 6th January. I am reluctant to write to you as letters take such a long time.

During the last month or so there has been rather intensive diplomatic activity in regard to the Far Eastern situation. That chapter is apparently closed now after the passing of the aggressor resolution by the U.N. Of course, the story will go on but, presumably, there will be a new chapter and a new phase.

My visit to London and Paris undoubtedly made a difference. In both places the Prime Ministers that I met agreed with me in private and certainly they were all afraid of war but, in the final analysis, they were not prepared to break with the U.S., and the U.S. had worked itself up to a state of hysterical obstinacy. I confess, however, that I expected a little more strength from Attlee and company. A speech by Attlee reported in today's papers justifying what was done at Lake Success read badly. You might have noticed that Pearson, even while giving his vote for the aggressor resolution, said that this resolution was "premature and unwise." The fact is that many of those who voted for this resolution felt unhappy about it and only did so under pressure of circumstance.

However, the thing is done now and I do not myself see what purpose the Good Offices Committee can serve at this stage. It was suggested to us to join this three-man Good Offices Committee. We told Rau not to do so, and we have adhered to this decision. A further suggestion is made that our presence might perhaps be useful provided the Chinese Government did not misunderstand it. I was asked to communicate with you on this subject. I decided, however, not to do so. I feel that we might be more useful outside that Committee.<sup>2</sup> If at any time the Chinese Government has any suggestions to offer to us about any form of negotiation or anything else, we shall gladly consider them.

Throughout this month in London, Paris, Lake Success and elsewhere (including Cairo), all our efforts had been concentrated in pleading China's cause and making other people understand it. We did succeed in some measure, though not as much as we wanted to. But I think that our efforts have not

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

2. On 3 February, Chou En-lai refused to recognise the legal status of the Good Offices Committee and described it as "an attempt to deceive good-hearted but naive peace-loving people." On 19 February, Entezam announced the formation of the Committee comprising himself, Sven Grafstrom of Sweden and Luis Padilla Nervo of Mexico.



been in vain, and they might bear fruit in future, if catastrophe does not come earlier.

I am glad, at any rate, that our relations with China are good and there is greater understanding of each other. Your work in this connection has been splendid. I fear that I am not exactly popular in the U.S. at present, and you are supposed to have sold yourself, body and soul, to the communists, and yet, oddly enough, I receive a large number of letters from the U.K., the U.S.A., etc., supporting the stand I took. In the U.K. there is a fairly strong popular movement in favour of it....

About my going to China, the fact is that it is exceedingly difficult for me to leave India for any length of time. Somehow things get hung up here in my absence or sometimes even go wrong. But, of course, if it is important, one has to risk this. Any visit in the near future might be ruled out. The more distant future is too vague and too full of dangerous possibilities for us to think about it now....

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 59. In Pursuit of Peace<sup>1</sup>

The House has taken a great deal of interest in foreign affairs. More particularly, in the present period of continuing crisis it is important that this House should be kept informed of developments and should give the weight of its support to the policy which we have been pursuing under its direction. I should like, therefore, to inform the House of important events that have taken place since I spoke on foreign affairs in Parliament last.<sup>2</sup> Honourable Members know the broad trends from the public press, but as the tempo of events becomes swifter, what happened yesterday is apt to be forgotten today.

About five weeks ago, I attended the Conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers in London.<sup>3</sup> I cannot give a detailed account of the talks that took place there because they were confidential. But the broad facts have been stated already. Press communiques issued by the Conference itself from time

1. 12 February 1951. *Parliamentary Debates, Official Report*, 1950, Vol. VIII, Part II, cols 2697-2706.

2. On 6 and 7 December 1950. See *ante*, pp. 422-449.

3. The Conference was held from 4 to 12 January 1951.

to time, and more particularly the Declaration<sup>4</sup> issued after the final sitting, give a fair indication of how our minds worked and what we aimed at.

Inevitably, much of our time was taken up by a discussion of the international situation, especially of the Far Eastern crisis. It was natural that the approaches of the different countries represented should not be identical; to some extent, each viewed these problems from a slightly different angle and, perhaps, some emphasized one aspect of them more than the other. But I should like to make it clear that there was, during these discussions, a very large measure of community of approach and objective. This was, indeed, very gratifying and is evident from the final Declaration of the Prime Ministers. All of us had one primary purpose—the maintenance of peace in this afflicted world of ours. All of us realised that widespread war would be the most terrible of disasters and that we should strain every nerve to prevent it. War would be disaster to any part of the world, but, perhaps, if world war came, the greatest sufferers would be the people of Europe, who have, in living memory, suffered so much from the horrors of two wars. It was natural, therefore, that the Prime Ministers assembled in London should be anxious to do everything to prevent a repetition, on a vaster and a more terrible scale, of this catastrophe, which might well put an end to the proud structure of European culture and civilisation.

But it was not Europe only that was concerned. Korea, in the Far East, is rapidly becoming a heap of ruins, while rival armies move up and down this unhappy country. Other countries in Asia and elsewhere would also inevitably be greatly affected if war came.

The situation in Europe has been a difficult one. The immediate problem that is causing much concern is the rearmament of Germany. On the one side, it is thought that security demands such rearmament. On the other, it is stated that this would be a breach of treaties and engagements and would endanger the security of other countries. So this question of the rearmament of Germany has become the most vital issue in Europe; a great deal depends on how it is decided.

But the immediate issue before the Conference was that of Korea and other connected issues in the Far East. If some kind of settlement could be arrived at in the Far East, there was no doubt that this would have a beneficent influence on the European situation as well as on many other international problems. Therefore, this Conference devoted much time to the Far East and

4. In a Declaration issued on 12 January, the Commonwealth Prime Ministers laid stress on restoring peace in Korea, but insisted that the rule of law must be upheld. Pledging their countries to peace, they called for an effort "to understand those who appear to differ from us" and "to see clearly into each other's hearts and minds." They also expressed their resolve to promote economic and social development in the under-developed countries.



its many problems. The military situation in Korea was grave and it seemed clear that no early decision could possibly be secured by a continuation of warfare. The only hope, therefore, lay in a negotiated settlement. It seemed clear to us that such a settlement could only be arrived at with the association and concurrence of the Powers principally concerned.

There was a general agreement that Korea should be unified and should, by a free election, decide its future and elect its own government. But an argument arose as to whether a ceasefire should precede or should follow a certain agreement on 'principles' on which negotiations for settling existing issues in the Far East should be based. One of the principal points in dispute was the future of Taiwan or Formosa. China claimed that in accordance with the Cairo Declaration, which was confirmed at Potsdam and which was, early in January 1950, reaffirmed in vigorous language by the U.S. Government,<sup>5</sup> Formosa should revert to China. China also claimed admission to the United Nations.

The House is aware that, for over a year, we have been firmly of opinion that the People's Government of China should be brought into the United Nations. This, according to us, was not only a recognition of a patent fact but was a necessary consequence of the whole scheme of the United Nations Organisation. Indeed, it may be said that if this unfortunate error of keeping out the new China from the U.N. had not been committed, much of the trouble that has subsequently occurred might have been avoided.

While we were meeting in London, the three-man committee of the U.N., and subsequently the First Committee, passed a resolution on 'principles' which should govern a negotiated settlement in the Far East. These 'principles' were carefully drafted and tried to meet, as far as possible, the legitimate demands of the various parties concerned. They provided for a ceasefire, for foreign armies to withdraw from Korea, and for four or five Powers, including the People's Government of China, to meet to discuss the terms of a settlement in the Far East in accordance with international agreements and the U.N. Charter. Formosa was specially mentioned. It was clear that the international agreements referred to would include the Cairo Agreement regarding Formosa and Korea.<sup>6</sup>

This resolution on 'principles' was agreed to almost unanimously by the U.N. The U.S.A., which has been so intimately connected with Far Eastern developments and where there is strong feeling on this subject, also agreed to

5. Truman declared on 5 January 1950 that the U.S. Government regarded Formosa as Chinese territory without qualification and would neither get involved in the civil conflict in China nor provide military aid or advice to Chinese forces in Formosa.

6. The Cairo Declaration of 1 December 1943 announced, *inter alia*, the decision on behalf of the U.S., the U.K., and China that Japan would be stripped of all the territories that she had taken "by violence and greed" and that Korea would "in due course. . . become free and independent."

this resolution. The acceptance of these 'principles' by so many Powers was a great advance and the hope of reaching a negotiated settlement became strong.

The Chinese reply appeared at first sight to be unfavourable and indeed was described by some, rather in a hurry, as a rejection. On closer examination, it was clear that it was not a rejection; in part it was acceptance and, in part, fresh suggestions. Subsequent clarification brought out still further that there was very wide area of agreement and the gap of disagreement had been very much narrowed. It was possible that this gap could also be closed if an earnest effort were made to that end.

Unfortunately, subsequent developments took a different turn and, ultimately, the U.N. passed a resolution condemning China as an aggressor. It seemed to us unwise to pass it at a time when attempts were being made for a negotiated settlement. It was clear that it would not help at all to call a country an aggressor when you intended having dealings with it in order to reach a settlement by negotiation. The two approaches were directly opposed to each other. Hence India opposed this resolution.

As we expected, the passing of this resolution has, for the time being at least, put an end to any attempts at negotiation or a settlement. We hope still that it may be possible for events to take a better turn in future but I must confess that, at the moment, that hope has grown very dim.

When I spoke of foreign affairs in Parliament on the last occasion, I tried to avoid, to the best of my ability, a criticism of other countries. I did so because I felt that, at a time when people's passions are aroused, it does not help to cast blame about. That is not the temper out of which successful negotiations and a settlement emerge. That is not the temper of peace that should govern our minds and actions, if we seek peace. Naturally we have our opinions which shape our policy and we think that a particular course is right and another is wrong. We give expression to these opinions and shape our policy accordingly. But in doing so, we have always sought the friendship of other countries, even though we might differ from them. The House will remember that we were grieved at a certain turn of events in Tibet,<sup>7</sup> but we did not allow that to affect our policy or our desire to maintain friendly relations with the People's Government of China. I am glad to say that our relations with the new China are friendly at present. These relations have been helpful in the attempts that have been made to reach a negotiated settlement of the Far Eastern problem. The fact that we have failed is not due, I think, to any lack of trying on our part. So also with the United States of America, that great nation, on whom a vast burden of responsibility has fallen and which is playing such a decisive part in world affairs today. We have endeavoured to maintain the friendly relations that have happily existed

7. See *ante*, Section 11.



between India and the United States and, in spite of difference of opinion, we shall continue to do so. There has been a great deal of criticism of our policy in the press and statements of prominent men in the United States. We welcome criticism and try to profit by it. We have not allowed this criticism to come in the way of our friendly feelings towards America, just as we cannot allow it to influence us in a direction which we consider unwise or wrong.

As I have often stated before this House, we do not claim to influence world affairs very much, nor have we any desire to do so. But fate and circumstance have cast a certain responsibility upon us also and dragged us into this whirlpool. We cannot easily escape this responsibility. The burden has to be shouldered to the best of our ability. In doing so, we have always to remember the main objectives for which we stand and the principles that have governed our activities, whether in the past or in more recent times. It would be a misfortune indeed, if, from either passion or fear or for some temporary present advantage, we deviated from those principles and objectives and betrayed tomorrow for an uncertain today. Therefore, it is our firm intention to continue this policy, which is the pursuit of peace and unfailing effort to maintain friendly relations with all other countries. Above all, we shall endeavour not to allow passion and prejudice to cloud our minds and lead us to wrong or hasty action.

The situation is full of peril not only for us but even more so for others in the world. Now, more than ever, we have to hold together and face the world as a united nation, prepared to face, without fear, whatever fate may bring.

The House knows that there were some talks about Kashmir when I was in London.<sup>8</sup> It should be clearly understood that the Prime Ministers' Conference had nothing to do with them. It is not the function of that Conference to deal with such matters and this was made perfectly clear at the time. Informal conversations took place at which some of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers were present. I should like to acknowledge that all those Commonwealth Prime Ministers who participated in these informal talks were actuated by the desire to help in every way in a satisfactory settlement of the Kashmir problem. Their approach was friendly; they did not wish to interfere; they had no personal interest except the larger interest of solving a difficult problem which came in the way of peace. Unfortunately, those talks did not yield any result.

It would normally not be proper for me, here or elsewhere, to discuss the content of these private and informal conversations. Indeed, it was decided at the time that no public reference should be made to them. But since such a reference has already been made—it has even been stated that three suggestions were put forward, each of which was accepted by the Prime Minister of

8. See *ante*, Section 9.

Pakistan and each rejected by me—and there has been a great deal of discussion on the subject in the press, I have no opinion but to deal with it.

We were dealing not merely with the question of Kashmir, important as that is, but with wider and deeper and more far-reaching problems. Therefore I ventured to point out in the course of the informal talks that we had to be very careful about any step that we might take, lest it should lead to all kinds of fresh upsets and new troubles which might affect the whole of India and Pakistan. We have sought peace and friendly relations with Pakistan, because it is inevitable, in the long run, that India and Pakistan should be friendly and cooperative. If a wrong step were taken now, the consequences might take us very far in a wrong direction.

Another thing that I pointed out was that Kashmir was not just a piece of territory to be bartered. It contained millions of human beings and they could not be treated as chattels. We had gone there at the request of many of them for their protection. So long as they required us for protection, we were bound to keep our pledge given to them. But we had no right to impose anything upon them against their wishes.

Of the three suggestions made one was that a Commonwealth force should be sent to Kashmir for the plebiscite. This suggestion was made in all good faith and without any ulterior motive. But I had to point out that the arrival of any foreign army on Indian soil would have unfortunate repercussions on Indian public opinion. It was only recently that foreign armies had left India and there would be fierce resentment if we, or anyone else, agreed, for any purpose, to have foreign troops come back to India. Then, again, who were we to thrust foreign troops on Kashmir? Moreover, the presence of foreign troops might give rise to all kinds of speculations in the prevailing atmosphere of international suspicion. For these reasons, I could not accept this suggestion.

The second suggestion was that a joint Indo-Pakistan force should be responsible for the security of Kashmir. This also I could not possibly accept, for it meant a complete reversal of what we had urged all along and, indeed, what the U.N. had agreed to, namely, that the first step should be the complete withdrawal of Pakistan forces from the Jammu and Kashmir State.

The third suggestion was that the Plebiscite Commissioner should himself raise a force in Kashmir. This was a novel suggestion which seemed to present practical difficulties. I said that, in spite of these misgivings, I was prepared to consider it in consultation with our friends in Kashmir, but always with due regard to our responsibility for the security of the State.

I shall now make a few general observations on the Kashmir problem. This problem has got a long history behind it. It is not history that began three years and four months ago, when a ruthless band of raiders invaded that lovely valley, bringing havoc and ruin.<sup>9</sup> It has a history which goes back

9. On 22 October 1947.



many more years during which the people of Kashmir struggled again and again to gain freedom from autocracy and feudalism. It was a privilege for many of us to be associated with that brave struggle. During those days, the question arose in Kashmir as to whether the people there would allow themselves to be submerged by the wave of communal bigotry or would stand out for freedom and nationalism as we understand them. There was no Indian army there, or other Indian influences, or any other kind of Indian pressure. The people of Kashmir built up a great national organisation under a gallant leader and not only struggled for freedom but also won a great victory over communalism and bigotry. All the elements of the population of Kashmir stood shoulder to shoulder in that struggle and the few that spoke and acted in terms of some medieval age, dishonouring the name of religion for the sake of political gain, were swept away. All this happened in the thirties, long before Partition came to India.

Let us remember this, and let those who criticise us without much knowledge of what has happened during the last twenty years, or indeed more recently, also remember it. For here deep and vital principles are involved for which we have fought all our lives in India; we are not going to give up those principles at anybody's bidding and under any threat. We have built up the noble structure of a free India on the basis of those principles and we will stand by them. The struggle in Kashmir should be seen in its proper perspective. It is a struggle of progress against reaction, of a secular nationalism against communalism and bigotry. If we succumb to the forces of reaction, then we would have failed indeed for we would have given up everything that has made life worthwhile to us. If Kashmir succumbs to them, then all that has made Kashmir great and beautiful, in the realm of thought, culture and art, would be a thing of the past.

When the people of Kashmir struggled for freedom against autocracy during these last twenty years, where were they who today shout loudly from across the border about the freedom of Kashmir? Most of them were allied to the forces of reaction or were silent. They still remain the representatives of reaction, even though they talk a different language and invoke the name of religion to confuse the issue.

During these past three years or more, many questions have arisen which obscure the main problem in Kashmir. I shall not refer to this past history which is well known. I shall only remind the House that it was a unilateral declaration on our part that the people of Kashmir should decide their fate for themselves. That had nothing to do with Pakistan. But I shall repeat, for the benefit of those who have short memories, that we sent some of our forces after a wanton and aggressive raid had taken place and was devastating the country. We went not only at the invitation of the Government of the day there, but also because the great popular organisation that had led the struggle

for freedom invited us to do so. We knew that Pakistan forces had taken part in this invasion but when we brought this fact to their notice, they denied it not only here but at Lake Success. For many months, while our plain offer for the people of Kashmir that it was for them to decide their own future by plebiscite or otherwise stood, there was no talk in Pakistan of a plebiscite in Kashmir; Pakistan hoped to attain its ends by force. When force failed to do so, Pakistan began thinking of the plebiscite.

What Pakistan said or did in this connection did not concern us. We had given our pledge to the people of Kashmir, and subsequently to the United Nations. We stood by it and we stand by it today—let the people of Kashmir decide.

During the past few months there has been an amazing and continuous outburst in Pakistan. Communal frenzy and religious bigotry have been raised to fever heat and people continue to talk about *jehad* and holy war. I should like anyone to compare this with what has happened in India, in the press or elsewhere. We have said little. We have even withdrawn a considerable part of our army from Kashmir. Not so Pakistan. We are prepared to continue this withdrawal, if Pakistan would remove her troops from the State completely. We shall keep, inside the State, only the minimum number of troops necessary for security purposes. No rational person can regard the maintenance of this minimum, chiefly in outlying places on the frontier, as a threat to the fairness of a plebiscite. Which is the way to a free and impartial plebiscite—our way or the way of *jehad*?

One closing word on Kashmir. I have been charged with inconsistency, with following one policy in Korea and another in Kashmir. I confess I am totally unaware of any inconsistency. In spite of our strong feelings about Pakistan's aggression in Kashmir, we have never asked the United Nations to brand Pakistan as an aggressor with all the consequences that follow from that decision. All I have said is that the fact of Pakistan's aggression, and the danger to Kashmir from any future aggression of this type, must be borne in mind in devising ways and means to enable the people of Kashmir to determine their future.

I have ventured to take up a great deal of the time of the House and I seek forgiveness for it. I have tried, as frankly as I could, to place what I have in mind before the House, because any policy that we may pursue or any step that we might take in these difficult times can only be effective if we have the full confidence of this House and the country. We face perils and difficulties. We can face perils and difficulties. We can face them with success when we are convinced that we are following the right course and when we are united in doing so.



## 60. Record of Talk with the U.S. Ambassador<sup>1</sup>

... The Prime Minister said that before discussing some of the broader aspects of the international situation he would like to clarify a small matter which one of the statements which I had just made to him brought to his mind. It was his understanding that on a personal basis I had recently approached Sir Girja Bajpai with regard to reports that Indian automobile tires were being sold to Communist China. He did not know whether there was any truth in these reports, but he was having the matter investigated. Tires, particularly truck tires, were in short supply in India; and if he should learn that Indian speculators were buying them up and sending them to China, he would try to put an end to this kind of trade.

The Prime Minister said that he had listened carefully to what I had had to say about the Soviet Union, the situation in Europe, and the situation in the Far East. There was truth in much that I had said. Nevertheless, it seemed to him that the situation was so grave that we must not permit ourselves to rest content with the mere presentation of facts or the submission of evidence regarding the aggressiveness of the Soviet Union or other communist countries. It seemed to him necessary to analyze the situation in its entirety and to find ways and means of preventing the outbreak of a new world war.

It was his understanding that the United States was of the opinion that the Soviet Union had aggressive intentions both in Europe and Asia; that it also thought that communism had taken advantage of the internal situations in some countries and the exposed international position of others in order steadily to expand by infiltration, by threats, or by open force; that the United States conceived that in its own interest as well as in that of world peace it must take every appropriate measure to put a stop to Soviet aggressiveness and to the spread of communism; that the United States considered Soviet aggressiveness and communist expansionism were intimately connected and to an extent interwoven; that the United States was looking to the system of collective security, as represented by the United Nations, for assistance in the carrying out of its present policies.

I said that his analysis seemed to me to be in general correct. I would like to point out, however, that the United States was not undertaking to prevent any nation which desired to be communist from becoming communist. It thought that every nation was entitled to have the form of government which its people wanted. What it objected to was the practice of International

1. New Delhi, 20 February 1951. Henderson's cable to Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1951, Vol. VI Part 2, pp. 2120-2127. Extracts.

Communism of forcing, by terror, threat and violence, free nations to submit to its yoke. The United States believed, I thought, that unless the free nations made it clear that they would collectively and resolutely oppose aggression, communist or otherwise, committed by either a great or small State, the Soviet Union as the directing centre of International Communism would continue to carry on its aggressive policies with a world war as the inevitable result.

The Prime Minister entered into a lengthy discourse regarding the meaning and probable outcome of a new world war. He did not believe that the United States and the other Western Powers would be defeated. On the other hand he did not believe that the United States and the Western Powers could completely conquer the Soviet Union and China. They might defeat the Soviet and Chinese armies and raze Soviet and Chinese cities and industrial centres but they could not saturate Russia and China with troops. There could, in his opinion, be no complete victory over the Soviet Union and China unless both countries were occupied throughout by troops of the victors. Obviously there were no armies among the Western Powers sufficiently large to make a complete conquest of Russia and China. Chinese and Russian forces could exist for many years in the vast spaces which could not be occupied or policed by their enemies. A new world war, therefore, was likely to continue indefinitely and there would be no absolute victor except hunger, pain and human suffering which would lead to some kind of indigenous communism in case International Communism should collapse. This situation must be apparent to intelligent leaders both in the Western world and in the communist world. Since the Western leaders would not like to become involved in a venture which would mean the end of their civilization and the communist leaders would not like to see their countries ravaged and their own organization wrecked, it seemed logical that the responsible leaders in neither world really wanted a war. The immediate task was to convince each world that the other did not really desire a war and, while endeavouring to find some basis for establishing a *modus vivendi* between the two worlds, to take care that some development or other should not ignite the war which neither side desired.

The Prime Minister said that mutual suspicions might in themselves lead to a world war. If, for instance, the Western world was convinced that the communist world was preparing aggression and should proceed to arm itself to the teeth to oppose this aggression, the communist world on its part might decide that it would be better to fight now than to wait until it should be attacked by the fully armed West. Furthermore, limited frictions and disputes which might appear at first to be of an isolated character might develop into a full world war conflagration.

The Government of India, realizing these dangers, had been doing its best to convince each of the two worlds that the other was not preparing to attack it. The policy of India in this respect was illustrated by the position it had



taken with regard to China. The Government of India did not believe that the People's Government of China had aggressive intentions against any country in Asia. It thought, however, that Peiping was determined to assume full control by force, if necessary, of all the territories which it considered to be a part of China, including Formosa and Tibet. He himself did not for a moment believe that Communist China had invaded Korea because it had aggressive designs against that country. It had intervened in Korea, in his opinion, because it was convinced that the United States was intending to use Korea as a base for the subsequent invasion of China itself. It was his belief that there could be no final solution of the Korean question which did not have the approval of Communist China. He also thought that it would be possible to obtain the consent of Communist China to "relatively fair" solution for Korea if that solution would be in the framework of an overall Far Eastern settlement.

I asked the Prime Minister what he meant by an overall Far Eastern settlement. What, in his opinion, should a Far Eastern settlement be and what kind of a settlement did he think would satisfy Communist China? The Prime Minister said that, in his opinion, Communist China wanted and should have Formosa; it should be admitted into the United Nations; and it should be treated as an equal by the other Great Powers and its view taken into consideration whenever important international questions involving the Far East would arise. He assumed that Communist China would want Hong Kong eventually, but he did not believe that this problem would arise in the foreseeable future.

The Prime Minister emphasized the importance of Formosa. That island was of no value to the United States except as a military base for possible operations against China. I said that there was also a negative aspect of the Formosan problem. If Formosa should fall under the domination of International Communism, it could serve as a base against Japan or the Philippines. The Prime Minister said that it might be possible to work out an arrangement whereby Communist China would undertake that if it was permitted to take Formosa it would establish no bases on the island. Of course, Communist China might not live up to such an agreement after it had once obtained possession of Formosa; nevertheless, risks were involved in every international agreement.

I said: "Let us assume that the United States would recognize Communist China and support its entry into the United Nations: that it would agree to the occupation of Formosa by Communist China. Would such concessions in themselves represent a Far Eastern settlement? Would not Communist China take the position that until a solution satisfactory to it of the Japanese problem had been achieved there could be no Far Eastern settlement? Furthermore, would not Communist China insist that the only solution to the Japanese problem would be for the United States to withdraw completely from Japan

and to leave an unarmed Japan to face an armed Russia and China? If the United States would not consent to this kind of arrangement, is there any possibility of a settlement just now of the Far Eastern problem? Would India like to see Japan placed in such an exposed position?"

The Prime Minister said that he had given some thought to this matter. He must admit that there could be no general Far Eastern settlement without the solution of the Japanese problem. In his opinion, it would be a mistake to rearm Japan. If the United States should undertake to restore Japan's military power, both the Soviet Union and Communist China would be convinced that Japan was being prepared as a base for operations against them. The rearming of Japan would be likely to provoke war rather than to contribute to a peaceful atmosphere. He himself thought that the best solution would be for the United Nations to guarantee Japan against aggression.

In response to several questions which I put to him, the Prime Minister admitted that it might be advisable to permit Japan to have sufficient arms to defend itself until the United Nations would have time to come to its assistance in case it should be the victim of aggression. Since neither Russia nor Communist China desired war, they would not, in his opinion, attack Japan if the latter was protected by a United Nations guarantee.

I pointed out that the Charter of the United Nations was in itself a guarantee against aggression. This guarantee, however, had not proved effective in preventing Korea from being invaded. Unfortunately too many nations took rather lightly the obligations which they had assumed when they signed the Charter. International Communism must have been aware of this fact when it invaded Korea. Unless the members of the United Nations should be prepared to make more sacrifices than they had been willing to make in the past to maintain the system of collective security, the guarantee of the United Nations would not be sufficient protection for an unarmed Japan.

The Prime Minister repeated that he was convinced that Russia and China would not risk a world war by deliberately upsetting a Far Eastern settlement calling for an unarmed, neutralized Japan.

With respect to Germany, the Prime Minister said his feelings about the rearmament of Western Germany were similar to those which he had just expressed regarding the rearming of Japan. He thought it was an extremely dangerous thing for the Western Powers to furnish Western Germany with arms. Such action might well frighten Germany's neighbours to the East and kindle a world war. It seemed to him much wiser for the Western Powers not to arm Western Germany but to use the threat of arming Western Germany as an argument for prevailing upon the Russians to disarm Eastern Germany. Germany could be an unarmed area lying between the communist and Western worlds. Each world would know that if it attacked Germany there would be a world war. That knowledge would serve as a deterrent.



I did not consider it advisable to turn my talk with the Prime Minister into an argument. As the hour set aside for our interview was drawing to a close I merely thanked him for his frankness in setting forth his views and said that it seemed to me that the basic divergencies between the foreign policies of India and those of the United States stemmed from differences in analyses of the motives of International Communism. India apparently was sincerely convinced that International Communism had no aggressive intentions and that its motives were primarily defensive. The United States, however, after a considerable amount of experience with the Soviet Union and its associates, was convinced that International Communism was inherently aggressive and that the only reason it was not engaging in undisguised aggression in various parts of the world was because it feared that if it did so it would find itself embroiled in a world war with most of the free nations lined up against it. In our opinion, the present policies of the Soviet Union and its associates were directed to disrupting the unity of the free world and to weakening the determination of the free world to resist aggression. If these policies should be successful, International Communism might feel that it would not be too dangerous for it to endeavour to realize some of its aggressive designs.

At this point in our conversation, Sir Girja Bajpai, Secretary-General, Ministry of External Affairs, entered the room with some documents for the Prime Minister to sign. My interview with the Prime Minister, therefore, terminated. The three of us, however discussed for a time the progress of the Bill in the United States Congress providing for foodgrains for India. I explained some of the procedures involved. For the first time the Prime Minister talked with me about the Indian need for foodgrains. His questions indicated that he had an active interest in the matter and would like to see the proposed legislation enacted. He did not, however, express any hopes on the subject or any appreciation of the efforts on India's behalf of the United States Government.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

I. Bilateral Relations

(i) United States of America





## 1. To Vijayalakshmi Pandit<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

October 27, 1950

Nan dear,

I received your letter of the 23rd October<sup>2</sup> today. A day or two ago I received another letter from you. Also numerous clippings from newspapers. I am having quite a press in the United States and I get all kinds of cuttings from all kinds of sources. It is obvious that you are not pleased at the turn that the U.S. press criticism has taken recently. Nor am I, for the matter of that. But I am not too worried. This criticism is so unbalanced that it overshoots its mark. The chief effect it produces on me is, well, to lessen my admiration for the American intellect or, at any rate, for the intellect of the politicians, journalists and the like. I am sure there are plenty of fine people in the United States.

I do not know how the future will shape itself. But I feel pretty confident that sometime later American comment will again change. Not that it matters very much, so far as I am concerned. But it does matter, so far as the world is concerned, if the United States go off the deep end in this way.

It may interest you to know that British correspondents do not lag far behind America, or at least some of them. In today's paper there is a message from Karachi which gave a report of an address delivered by William Courtenay,<sup>3</sup> London *Sunday Times* and *Daily Graphic* correspondent. He is supposed to be a veteran war correspondent and he was returning from Karachi. He stopped at Karachi and addressed the R.A.F. personnel there.<sup>4</sup> He said:

Nehru with complete chicanery tried to placate Russia so that the Soviets, if they won, would not march one day into India. He was more anxious to stand well with the victor—if it were Russia—than to do his duty honourably to the United Nations. For these reasons, he was prepared to bargain with evil, masking it as high but phoney idealism. India had, in consequence, now lost the goodwill of the United States.

This has been reported in a British Information Service press note from Karachi.

I am much more worried that we do the right thing than about press comments. How to do the right thing, or rather to know what the right thing

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, while sending copies of despatches from Robert Trumbull, New Delhi correspondent of *The New York Times*, commented that "that man is doing more harm to us than any other single individual."

3. (1896-1960); a correspondent of conservative newspapers in London, 1938-60.

4. On 24 October 1950.



is, is not an easy matter. I feel, however, that, generally speaking, we have not strayed far from the right path in the policy we have pursued in regard to Korea and China. I must confess, however, that the Chinese Government has not played fair with us in regard to Tibet. I feel hurt about this.

Your telegram came today about the Chancellorship of Cambridge. This is rather a mystery to me. The papers contain news about it,<sup>5</sup> but no one has approached me. I can hardly go about refusing things before they are offered to me. I sent a telegram to Krishna Menon that in case any offer came, he should express my deep gratitude, but point out that it was not feasible.<sup>6</sup> Also that in no event would I enter a contest. Krishna replies that though it is true that many dons and electors at Cambridge have suggested my name, no offer has come to him about it.

I feel rather tired and exhausted. I am going early tomorrow to Kashmir for my usual two days.<sup>7</sup> I hope to rest.

With love from  
Jawahar

5. On 17 October, it was reported that the *Varsity*, the Cambridge University undergraduates' newspaper, had announced Nehru as its choice for the Chancellorship, which fell vacant due to the death of J.C. Smuts. On 23 October, a committee of sponsors met the Indian High Commissioner in London in this connection. It was further reported that on 25 October a statement signed by ninety members of the Senate, including E.M. Forster, six Professors and the Director of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, was circulated in the University soliciting support for Nehru's nomination.
6. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, p. 563.
7. Nehru visited Kashmir from 28 to 30 October 1950.

## 2. The Hate Campaign against India<sup>1</sup>

The recent spate of criticism of India, and more especially of me, in the United States has all the appearance of an organised campaign. From various sources it appears that the State Department is encouraging this, if it has not actually given the hint to start it. This campaign has gone so far as to overshoot its mark and is therefore likely to recoil on its originators. Normally I would not have minded this at all, as I am quite sure that in the long run it is not going to do us any harm and it might well harm those people who get hysterical

1. Note to the Secretary-General, M.E.A., 27 October 1950. J.N. Collection.

about it. But in view of certain indications that the State Department is encouraging this campaign, I think it would be desirable to call the American Ambassador and tell him of the consequences of this campaign. We have no wish to come in the way of the freest expression of opinion in America or elsewhere, but as it does appear to us that the State Department approves of this campaign and encourages it, we should just like to point out that it can only have one result and that is to embitter feelings between India and America. We are not used to acting under this type of pressure. We regret it because we would not like our relations with America to suffer and yet this is the only result that can follow such a campaign in the United States.

2. *The New York Times* Trumbull despatches<sup>2</sup> have also been pretty bad recently.

3. The British press functions more or less on party lines. Some of the U.K. newspapers have been as bad<sup>3</sup> as the American ones. The attached cutting<sup>4</sup> has, however, a certain importance because it has been issued by the British Information Service in Karachi. It can therefore be accepted as official encouragement of such views as are expressed by the *Sunday Times* correspondent, William Courtenay. The British High Commissioner should be sent for and asked for an explanation about this. Again, it might be pointed out that the British press can say and do what it likes, but for a British Mission to issue such press notes can only mean that they are not anxious to have friendly relations with India. I think we should take the strongest exception to this.

4. I think the attention of our High Commissioner in London should also be drawn to this, more especially to the fact that the British Information Services have been giving such publicity. It might be added that consistently the British High Commissioner's Office in Karachi puts out, through official channels, reports hostile to India.

2. For example, Trumbull's dispatch published in *The New York Times* of 15 October 1950 said: "Meanwhile their tactics—particularly of India's of the United Nations' handling of the Korean War—almost force a conclusion that until circumstances compel a commitment to one side or the other, they want the best they can get of both worlds. They want our money and Soviet bloc's goodwill—and our goodwill too, of course." In another dispatch published on 23 October 1950, Trumbull stated: "The truth is that the Prime Minister's foreign policy has few wholehearted supporters in his own Cabinet... it is said freely here that the majority of Pandit Nehru's Cabinet colleagues feel that India is doing herself a disservice by not supporting the Western democracies more openly in the struggle against Soviet imperialism. However, in the Cabinet discussions, Pandit Nehru's emotion always carries the day."

3. *The Daily Telegraph*, commenting on Nehru and India's attitude on the Korean situation, wrote on 17 October 1950: "We know him to be our friend and we share many of his ideas but it is not always so easy to sympathize with his attitude in practice." *The Scotsman* (Edinburgh) considered that Nehru's "attitude betrays a rather naive lack of realism."

4. See *ante*, p. 517.



### 3. Cable to Vijayalakshmi Pandit<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram 589 October 27th<sup>2</sup> received on return today from Kashmir. Would like you to convey following reply suitably.

Begins: I appreciate frank approach. It has been our consistent policy throughout these years to have friendly relations and add to our contacts with America. We have always tried to understand and appreciate American policy and, insofar as we can, to support it. It must be remembered however that we have a certain background in regard to public affairs which has grown during the last thirty years. We have adhered to certain principles and trained our people to think in those terms. In adherence to those principles we have spent greater part of our lives in the wilderness. Our policy is based on those principles and we cannot be expected to change it unless we are convinced of our error.

We try to view problems objectively and impersonally without bringing in, as far as we can, hatred and bitterness. Having grown up under Gandhiji's influence we have intense dislike for violent methods and war though we realise that in existing circumstances they cannot always be avoided. Pressure tactics have an unfortunate result on our people.

I am grateful for all the good things that have been said about me by the President and the Secretary of State.<sup>3</sup> I wish to assure them in all honesty that I have no desire for leadership in Asia or to advance my own prestige in any way. I seek to serve India and the cause of world peace to the best of my ability.

The Lucknow Conference had nothing to do with us officially nor did I know who was going there. I regret exceedingly that anything that I may have said should have hurt responsible Americans.<sup>4</sup> That has never been my intention,

1. New Delhi, 30 October 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Vijayalakshmi Pandit reported that the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, George C. McGhee, had in a talk with her on 26 October spoken of the U.S. Government's distress at the growing rift between India and the U.S.A.
3. Vijayalakshmi Pandit reported that McGhee had told her that the U.S. were exploring all avenues for closer relationship with India, "bending backward in paying tribute to fine personal qualities and leadership of Nehru." Besides, statements of the President and the Secretary of State of the U.S. had shown American awareness of Asia's importance and India's leadership in Asia.
4. McGhee had pointed out that continued criticism of the U.S.A. in the Indian press and particularly during the Pacific Relations Conference at Lucknow had led to retaliatory criticism in the U.S. press. Statements made by Nehru and other responsible leaders there "have wounded us deeply," McGhee added. For Nehru's address at the Pacific Relations Conference, see *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 499-507.

but I have been forced by circumstances to refer to matters in public frankly without meaning any ill will to any country.

I am very much surprised to learn that I am supposed to have shown no interest to Senator Pepper<sup>5</sup> and Marquis Childs<sup>6</sup> regarding American assistance and that I responded with warmth to Michael Straight.<sup>7</sup> I attach no importance to my talks with Michael Straight except that I know his family rather well. I assured Senator Pepper and Marquis Childs and others that American assistance would always be welcome. I have said this to every American who has seen me and added that such assistance should of course have no political strings attached as this would not be accepted by our people.<sup>8</sup> This has been our attitude for the last two years. I confess that there is a feeling of disappointment in India at the lack of progress made in this respect and a feeling that political considerations govern such assistance.

I have myself noticed with regret that there has been a growing rift between India and America. I would very much like to stop and reverse this. We also have been hurt by much that has been said in America. There is a feeling here that State Department's policy is not friendly to India in many matters about which we feel deeply and that recent press comments in the United States had the approval of the State Department. It is those press comments chiefly that have affected public opinion here.

I would gladly meet Henderson whenever he wishes to see me.<sup>9</sup> I have often told him so. During the last two months, in spite of heavy preoccupations, I have met every American who wished to see me and have seen large numbers of American businessmen, politicians, newspapermen and professors. I have

5. Claude D. Pepper (1900-1989); Member, U.S. Senate, 1936-51, and later of House of Representatives for many years. He met Nehru in New Delhi on 12 October 1950.
6. Marquis William Childs (1903-1990); American journalist; on staff of *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, 1926-44 and 1954-68; United Feature Syndicate columnist, 1944-54; author of several books including *Witness to Power* (1975).
7. Michael W. Straight (b. 1916); editor, *New Republic*, Washington, 1941-43 and 1946-56; deputy chairman, National Endowment for the Arts, Washington D.C., 1969-77; President, Amnesty International, 1968-71.
8. McGhee told Vijayalakshmi that all U.S. attempts to offer material assistance had failed to rouse interest in the Government of India and this had become evident during recent visits to India of Senator Pepper and Marquis Childs, who on the authority of the State Department had spoken to Nehru about U.S. assistance to India through the Commonwealth Plan but failed to get positive response. McGhee also disliked Nehru's show of warmth to Michael Straight who, he felt, was not the proper channel for interpreting India's stand to the U.S.A. McGhee thought that India's acceptance of U.S. grant through the Commonwealth Plan could not be considered as subservience to U.S. policy.
9. McGhee wanted Vijayalakshmi Pandit to use her influence for restoration of friendliness between India and U.S.A. and wished more personal contacts between Nehru and the U.S. Ambassador in India.



indeed gone out of my way to meet them and be friendly with them because of my desire to be understood and to promote friendship between our two countries.

I would again repeat that we have grown up in certain traditions which we value. We know that our country is poor and weak and we have no illusions about our capacity to influence world events, but we hold to those traditions and principles. We have followed the policy we considered right in spite of this being disapproved by other countries. As an example, I might mention our reaction to recent developments in Tibet. Ends.

#### 4. To C.D. Deshmukh<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
October 31, 1950

My dear Deshmukh,

Your letter of October 30th<sup>2</sup> about Colombo Plan.<sup>3</sup>

We have already agreed to the publication of this report, and you can, therefore, go ahead with this matter without waiting for any further discussion.

As regards the question of assistance from the U.S.A., our position has been all along that we are prepared to have any assistance subject always to there being no political strings attached to it, or other conditions which we might not find agreeable to accept. I agree with you, therefore, that we should instruct our officers to explore possibilities of cooperation in this matter, if and when the Government of the U.S.A. approach the Government of India on this subject.

I am suggesting Thursday, the 9th November, for a meeting of the Cabinet to consider this.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Deshmukh recommended publication of the main report on the Colombo Plan as well as the report of the Standing Committee on Technical Assistance by the Commonwealth Consultative Committee. He also thought that the Government in order to tide over the serious economic situation should decide on the extent and the form of the U.S. financial assistance when it was made as its acceptance after appropriate bilateral negotiations could not involve any loss of dignity and self-respect.

3. A plan for cooperative economic development in South and South-East Asia was drawn up in accordance with the recommendations of the Commonwealth Consultative Committee on Economic Development of South and South-East Asia at its Sydney Conference in May 1950. The plan was published on 28 November 1950.

## 5. To Vijayalakshmi Pandit<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

November 1, 1950

Nan dear,

... I sent you a long reply<sup>2</sup> to your telegram about your long interview with McGhee.<sup>3</sup> What really surprised me about that interview was his protest that I showed warmth to Straight and not to Senator Pepper and Marquis Childs. As a matter of fact I saw Straight in my office for a very short time. I did not even know that he was an Editor of the *New Republic*. He came to me as the stepson of Elmhirst,<sup>4</sup> whom I have known for many years. He asked me a question or two, I replied, and he departed. Senator Pepper came to lunch with me with his wife and spent about an hour and a half. I must say that his talk was neither intelligent nor illuminating. We talked about various matters. A little before he was leaving, he mentioned something about American aid.

As for Marquis Childs, he came to dinner and stayed for a couple of hours afterwards. We had a long talk about all manner of subjects. I rather liked him and so spoke frankly about many things. Again, American help was only casually mentioned. My consistent reply to all this has been that we are always prepared to have American help in regard to our food or development programmes. We would welcome it. Naturally we do not want any strings attached to it. As a matter of fact, there has been nothing to welcome thus far except vague talk. Today Walker Stone<sup>5</sup> came to lunch with me. He had previously sent me a large number of questions, the normal ones dealing with Korea, China, the U.N., Tibet, Lucknow Conference, American help, etc., etc. Instead of dealing with all these questions separately, I held forth to him most of the time and, I fear, rather confused and overwhelmed him. He was not quick on the uptake.

The Tibetan situation, ever since the Chinese have sent their troops into Tibet, has naturally been an important topic here. I think the Chinese have acted rather foolishly and done some injury to their cause. There is a strong feeling here of having been rather let down by them. Some people indeed are very angry. I do not think all this is justified and we have to be careful not to overdo it. Henderson paid a visit to Bajpai and vaguely hinted that the State Department would be glad to help, if its help was sought in this matter. No

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

2. See *ante*, pp. 520-522.

3. George C. McGhee (b. 1912); Assistant Secretary of State for Near East, South Asian and African Affairs, 1949-51.

4. Leonard Knight Elmhirst; founder-director, rural reconstruction institute, Visva Bharati; later assisted in the development of Damodar Valley Corporation.

5. Walker Stone (1904-1973); writer, and later executive in the Scripps-Howard Newspaper Alliance, 1927-73; editor-in-chief, Scripps-Howard Newspapers, 1953-69.



reply was needed and no reply is being given. As a matter of fact, I am dining with Henderson tomorrow. If he asks me, I shall gratefully decline the suggested help. Nothing could be more damaging to us and our cause than asking for American help to deal with the Tibetan situation.

Whenever something new like this happens, there is a tendency to react more than is necessary or desirable. It is natural that our enthusiasm for supporting China wanes somewhat and we shall have to be careful about the steps we take. But our general policy remains the same....

With love from  
Jawahar

## 6. Nehru and the United States<sup>1</sup>

I went to dinner with Mr Henderson, the American Ambassador, last night and had a long talk with him lasting for about two hours or more. I had not had an occasion for such a talk with him for many months. He expressed his regret and apology for this long interval and said that while he wanted to see me often, he refrained from doing so, because he knew how busy I was. I reminded him that I had often told him that he could see me whenever he wanted to.

2. He said that he wanted to have an absolutely frank talk with me. He was unhappy that the relations of India and America were not as good as they should be. He had come to India<sup>2</sup> with high hopes and he had worked hard to foster better relations. But unfortunately events had taken a different turn. He could not understand why this should be so, because the United States earnestly desired the friendship and goodwill of India and was anxious to help in any way acceptable to India. An impression had spread that India was not keen on such help, because she thought that it might render her under an obligation to the United States, or because it might affect her independent policy. America had no desire to bring the slightest pressure on India in any way or to interfere with her independent policy. He referred to my visit to America<sup>3</sup> and asked me to tell him quite frankly if anything happened there which had displeased

1. Note to the Secretary-General, M.E.A., 3 November 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. Loy Henderson came to India as U.S. Ambassador in 1948.

3. Nehru visited the U.S.A. from 11 to 23 October and again from 26 October to 7 November 1949, spending the three intervening days in Canada.

me. He himself referred to two incidents, which had distressed him somewhat. One of these was a dinner at a banker's in New York,<sup>4</sup> where our host, in his after-dinner speech, casually said that his guests that night (they were about fifteen or sixteen of them, apart from our party) controlled twenty-one million dollars. This was not the sort of thing that should have been said and he could understand that my reactions to it could not have been good. The second incident was the lavishness and the diamonds at the dinner given at the Greenbrier Hotel<sup>5</sup> by Louis Johnson. This too, he said, was a crude display and I must have disliked it.

3. I told the Ambassador that he was completely wrong in thinking that any particular incident in America, or indeed anything that happened to me during my stay there, had displeased me or affected my thinking. It is true that the incidents he mentioned had seemed to me rather odd or ostentatious. But they had no importance. As a matter of fact, I took away with me the pleasantest recollections of America and had a feeling of gratitude for the very warm welcome that all kinds of people gave me there. My visit gave me an intimate feeling about America. I liked the frankness, forthrightness and generous hospitality of the American people. I did not like everything that I saw, or perhaps it is more correct to say that I did not quite feel myself in tune with some aspects of American life. For instance, there was much in New York which was very striking and attractive. But I do not think that I would care to live there for long. The one criticism that I might make of America, without any ill will, was that I found the country generally rather "loud". Perhaps this was just the exuberance of youth. But, as a whole, America and the American people created a very favourable impression upon me and I met some very fine types there.

4. The Ambassador said that New York was not America. It was just a huge shop-window and many Americans themselves would not like to live there. It was quite true, he said, that there was some "loudness" in the U.S. People were somewhat immature and were growing up. At the same time there were large parts of America, where I could not have found this.

5. The Ambassador then said that even before I had gone to the U.S., he had worked hard to fix up some substantial help from the U.S. for India. The International Bank had considered this question from too narrow a point of view and decided that India's borrowing capacity in terms of dollars was 250 millions. (I am not quite sure of the figure.) This question ought, however, to be looked from a wider point of view. In discussing this matter in Washington,

4. The dinner was given at the Knickerbocker Club, New York, on 19 October 1949 by Floyd Blair, Vice-President of the National City Bank of New York.

5. The press had commented on the dinner given at White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, on 29 October 1949 by Louis Johnson, U.S. Secretary of Defence, as "epoch-making gesture of American hospitality which even Kings might envy."



they had found that there were legal and other difficulties and Congressional sanction might be necessary for any major help. They were thinking then in terms of some kind of a grant to India for food or development. But on my arrival in New York, in addressing a meeting of Indians there at India House, I had said that I had not gone to America to ask for gifts.<sup>6</sup> This had rather damped their ardour and he could not proceed any further on the lines he had worked on.

6. I told him that I was a little surprised to hear this. Our attitude had always been that we would welcome financial assistance from America for food or development on honourable terms to both. We did not want any political strings to be attached to such help. I saw no difficulty in coming to an arrangement satisfactory to both parties. But somehow we had talked a long time about it without anything emerging. When I went to the U.S., I mentioned foodgrains especially<sup>7</sup> and various proposals were put forward about a large quantity of foodgrains to be supplied to us on a deferred payment system, or without interest, or for the U.S. itself to stock this quantity here under their own responsibility. Somehow all these proposals fell through and I was a little disappointed. Our subsequent talks also did not yield any result. I accepted the position, as I felt that, for the moment, perhaps the U.S. Government did not wish to pursue this matter any further. Nevertheless there had been many talks at official level even afterwards without producing any result.

7. So far as we were concerned, I repeated, we would welcome assistance from the U.S. and I did not see why this could not be arranged if both parties were agreeable, as they appeared to be. It was easy enough to work out details and forms of assistance. What I had said at the meeting in New York had nothing much to do with this. I had said, in addressing some of my countrymen, that I had come on a friendly visit to convey my greetings to the American people and to try to get to know them better and not on a mission to ask for gifts, etc. I had added that we would gladly welcome assistance, especially in regard to food, which we lacked. Anyhow the position was quite clear and there was no difficulty on our part about such assistance being given on honourable terms to both. If this was applied for development purposes, that would naturally add to our wealth-producing capacity and we would be able to repay it later. What we would like would be not to be burdened in the immediate present or the near future. Even as regards some kind of a grant, especially of food, we had no objection in principle, provided this was done in a proper way.

8. We discussed the Colombo Plan and I told him that if the U.S. was prepared to associate itself with this Commonwealth plan in giving assistance

6. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 13, pp. 310-312.

7. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 13, pp. 295-296.

to the countries of South East Asia, we had no objection and we would welcome it.

9. The Ambassador told me that his people were distressed at the charges often made in India about American imperialism. His country had always been opposed to imperialism and colonialism and that outlook continued. There had been strong isolationist sentiments in the U.S., but world developments had forced the U.S. to assume large responsibilities.

10. I replied that for my part I was not afraid of what was called American imperialism, because I thought that my country was strong enough to meet any such approach. As for the charge itself, I did not think that the United States deliberately thought in terms of any kind of imperialism as such. But the U.S. was a young, powerful and dynamic country and naturally tended to expand in various ways, especially economic. At the present moment, the main driving force of American policy appeared to me to be the fear of the spread of Soviet power or communist influence. Because of this, and not so much because of any desire to spread out politically or economically, there was a tendency to gain control, political or economic, of certain areas, partly to prevent them falling under the control of communism and partly to utilise them in case of war. But in any event, I was not scared of what was called American imperialism and, whatever truth there might be in it, much of the criticism was wide of the mark.

11. The Ambassador said that frequent references were made to Power Blocs and to India keeping away from them and carrying on an independent policy. He did not think that the U.S. was in any Power Bloc or itself constituted any such thing. In any event, he wished to assure me that the State Department had no desire that we should align ourselves, in the way often suggested, with the U.S. or any group of nations. Naturally they would welcome our support to their general policies or to any particular policy, but they quite appreciated India's policy to keep free from any alignment. They thought it was in many ways a right policy for India, even though they would like India to support them as much as possible. There was no question whatever of the U.S. exercising any pressure on India to change her policy.

12. The Ambassador discussed communism and said that he was considered as an enemy of communism. This was not true. He did not like many of the aspects of communism and the way Soviet Russia had functioned. He felt that the Soviet was an expansionist and aggressive force, which was dangerous in the present context of the world, and had to be checked. The only way to check it was to make it realise that there was sufficient strength to do so. He admitted that the Soviet did not want war. But they wanted to spread out as much as possible without war. If the United States, etc., were weak and not capable of stopping Soviet expansion, then the latter would continue and ultimately lead to war. The United States did not want war. But they felt that the only



way to check war was to be strong enough and to make the other party realise that any aggression meant war. This would effectively stop war. He emphasized that the U.S. was not against communism as such, but against aggression.

13. He mentioned that in 1946 the U.S. were face to face with a very difficult question. Russia then, if it so chose, could have fairly easily occupied Turkey and reached the Dardanelles and also seized Iran, etc., in the Middle East. The U.S. were not in a position to check them effectively if this had happened. They considered this very carefully and had to decide whether, in the circumstances, they would allow this aggression to take place or, in spite of their lack of preparedness, try to stop it. After careful thought, they came to the conclusion that the risk must be taken and Soviet Russia was informed privately, but clearly, that any aggression on Turkey or the Middle East would mean war. No such aggression took place, presumably because of this warning.<sup>8</sup> Since that decision, American policy had been to prevent Soviet aggression, wherever it might take place, even at the risk of war.

14. He asked me if I thought there was any danger of Soviet aggression on India. I said that I saw no such danger in the foreseeable future. I could understand such danger in Turkey or the Middle East. But there was no point in the Soviet indulging in the hazardous and difficult operation of attacking India across the Himalayas. Of course, if there was a general war all over the world, all kinds of things might happen. In any event, the possibility of Soviet aggression on India did not frighten me. Naturally aggression or war in the Middle East would have its repercussions on the Indian situation.

15. The Ambassador referred to Tibet. I told him that we were publishing our correspondence the next day.<sup>9</sup> He asked me if the U.S. could help in any way. I told him that apart from the impracticability of such a proposal, I thought that any attempt by the United States to help would be very harmful. That would immediately provide the fullest justification to China for what she had done. She had been talking about Anglo-American intrigues in Tibet, without any justification, I thought. But if America tried to come into the picture in this way, that charge would appear to be largely justified.

16. He referred to the Indo-Tibetan frontier in the event of Communist China coming right up there. I told him that I was not scared in any way from a military point of view. It was a very difficult frontier and on the other side

8. In August 1946, Turkey rejected a Soviet proposal for making defence of the Black Sea straits the joint responsibility of Turkey and the Soviet Union, since this would mean Soviet bases and forces on Turkish territory. The U.S.A. supported the Turkish stand by informing the U.S.S.R. that Turkey in accordance with the Montreux Convention of 1936 should continue to be primarily responsible for defence of the Straits.
9. The notes of 28 October and 1 November 1950 sent by the Government of India to the Government of China, and the Chinese Government's reply of 30 October, appeared in the press on 3 November 1950.

lay the hard and uninhabitable table-land of Tibet. Nevertheless it would obviously make a difference, if Communist China was in control on the other side of this long frontier line. We would have to take normal precautions to keep the border safe from intrusion or infiltration. Apart from this, I could not see any reason for China involving herself on the Indian frontier. There was probably a greater risk involved in the Sino-Burmese frontier, which was an easier one and was undefined in many places.

17. There was some reference to the prevalence of some kind of hysteria in the U.S. in regard to communism and war. I pointed out that while the U.S. did not want war, many of their activities encouraged the war atmosphere and this might lead to war. This was unfortunate. I could understand a country preparing itself for any emergency, and not taking any risks. But surely this continuous shouting of war and war preparations could only have bad results. The Ambassador said that he agreed with me, but a country with a democratic background of the U.S. had to face a grave difficulty. Unless the people were kept at a certain pitch of excitement, they could not even prepare for war. They could not get the credits and they could not get the men, who relapsed into a state of forgetfulness and inaction and soft living. Hence it became necessary to create an atmosphere to bring these men upto the mark. I pointed out that this was not only a dangerous way but ultimately risky and likely to fail. It was not possible to keep up a high state of excitement for lengthy periods, or to repeat this frequently. Either it led to war or it led to staleness and to a gradual relapse. After that it might be even more difficult to rouse the people up.

18. The Ambassador agreed that this was a possibility. He said this was the dilemma of democracy or, at any rate, of American democracy. Communist or totalitarian States could function differently and be more prepared for war.

19. We discussed war and the consequences of world conflict. The Ambassador agreed that these consequences were horrible to contemplate and even victory would not balance the evil that might flow from a world war. Such a war would bring enormous destruction in its train, food-growing areas would be destroyed and large-scale starvation would follow. In effect, chaotic conditions might prevail over large parts of the earth's surface. In a war between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., it was difficult to imagine that either side could win easily. Both were capable of lengthy resistance. Meanwhile the world would drift back to barbarism. All or many cultural standards would go and the level of life would sink ever lower. In the result confusion and chaos might well prevail over large parts of the world and thus produce conditions out of which some kind of primitive communism might grow. Thus, having defeated the organised communism of today, after a tremendous effort, the problem that might well remain would be of new and worse evils to be faced. The Ambassador agreed that all this was possible and hence it was of vital importance to avoid



war. At the same time to surrender to communist aggression would also bring about a war and there could be no surrender, and the only way to avoid war appeared to be to be strong enough to make the other party realise that war was inevitable if aggression took place.

20. Finally, the Ambassador said that he was very pleased and very grateful to me for the long talk we had had, which had helped greatly in clearing up many misunderstandings. He hoped that whenever there was the possibility of a misunderstanding, this would be cleared up immediately.

## 7. To Vijayalakshmi Pandit<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

December 13, 1950

My dear Ambassador,

I enclose a copy of a telegram<sup>2</sup> which is being sent to you. This deals with the food situation here and gives fairly full particulars about the action we have taken to meet the grave emergency that has arisen. We have had, as you know, an unprecedented series of disasters and calamities,<sup>3</sup> with the result that we are continually on the verge of semi-famine conditions. We live, as our Food Minister has put it, from ship to mouth. We are resolved to do our utmost to meet the situation and have, therefore, placed large orders for foodgrains in various parts of the world. We have already contracted for, or are in the process of doing so, for four million tons of foodgrains. Even that is barely sufficient, and if ill luck pursues us, it may be considerably less than we require. For this reason our Food Minister thinks that we should have at least another million and a half tons of foodgrains.

I need hardly point out to you what a heavy burden this is on our finances and economic position, but there is no help for it, and we cannot allow our people to starve. The four million tons that we have ordered takes us to the limit of our resources, extended as they are.

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Not printed.

3. There were floods in north Bihar during June 1950; cyclone and heavy rains in parts of West Bengal in July; earthquake and floods in Assam in August; floods in eastern U.P., Pepsu and Kashmir in September; drought in eastern U.P., Bihar, parts of West Bengal, Orissa, Vindhya Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh since mid-September; and failure of north-east monsoon affecting south Madras, parts of Mysore, Hyderabad and Bombay.

What we now hope to do about additional imports of foodgrains, such as suggested, we have indicated in our telegram.<sup>4</sup> Some *ad hoc* arrangement might be made about them. We have suggested some method of deferred payment or the U.S. stocking grains here. You will remember that these methods were discussed even last year,<sup>5</sup> but did not lead to any satisfactory result. We were always told that the American Congress came in the way.<sup>6</sup> So the matter was dropped.

I am told that there is a general impression in the U.S., in Government and business circles, that we have not sufficiently pressed for any help. In fact, that we are too proud to do so and all that. The American Ambassador here has also told me about this impression.<sup>7</sup> I informed him that I just did not understand this. We would gladly accept any kind of help. The only consideration that we have mentioned is that there should be no political strings attached to it. The American Ambassador told us that he completely agreed and that there could be no question of attaching any political strings. He mentioned that just before my visit to the U.S. last year he had been trying his best to get some arrangement through the U.S. to help us with foodgrains, but this was put an end to by the impression created that I was not particularly anxious to have such help. I told him that this appeared to me ridiculous. We had on many occasions made it clear that we would welcome help in this respect. The response was not favourable, and naturally we felt that it was unbecoming for us to go on repeating this all the time.

I am pointing this out to you because it does surprise me that people in the U.S. think that we are not anxious for help in regard to the food situation. As a matter of fact, we have no objection to a free grant of foodgrains, but, of course, we cannot ask for it. If the suggestion comes from the U.S. Government our reply should be that we have no objection to it and we shall gladly consider any kind of approach. The one approach that we would not like is one to which political strings and conditions are attached.

I am writing all this for your personal information and to supplement my telegram, so that you may bear this in mind when you have any talks with U.S. officials.

4. It suggested requesting the U.S. Government for ad hoc assistance to obtain one and a half to two million tons of foodgrains. This would be in addition to 750,000 tons of milo at the U.S. internal support price and 500,000 tons of wheat at the International Wheat Agreement price for which request had already been made.
5. Discussions took place between the U.S. and Indian officials in October 1949 for India's acquiring one million tons of American wheat.
6. The U.S. officials announced on 28 September 1950 that in the absence of necessary legislative authorization the Government could not send food supplies as gift to relieve near-famine conditions in some parts of India.
7. See the preceding item.



There is the other matter mentioned in the telegram about shipping.<sup>8</sup> Obviously, our purchases of foodgrains abroad will not help us much if we do not have adequate shipping. The critical international situation is likely to make shipping more and more scarce. Hence the necessity for making arrangements as early as possible.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

8. Assistance of the U.S. Government was sought to secure necessary shipping to ensure the arrival of half a million tons of foodgrains per month from February 1951 onwards.

## 8. Activities of the American Consuls<sup>1</sup>

Various reports have been reaching me from time to time to the effect that some of the American Consuls and other representatives, as well as some of the U.K. representatives, are taking quite a considerable interest in our internal politics. I have drawn attention to their activities on our North Eastern border. I think our Intelligence and State Governments should keep wide awake about these matters. We should also be very careful in regard to any report received by us from the U.K. or the U.S.A. sources in regard to our internal affairs or Indian nationals. We should avoid too close contacts with the Intelligence people of other Governments.

I think it would be desirable for Foreign Secretary to mention to someone from the American Embassy that we have received reports of some of their Consuls taking too intimate an interest in our internal politics and even showing their sympathy for some groups and movements which are against Government.<sup>2</sup> This hardly lies in the scope of diplomatic or consular activities and creates unnecessary suspicion. This can be said in the course of a conversation. No one need be summoned for this particular purpose.

1. Note to Foreign Secretary, 4 February 1951. File No. 41-6/51-AMS, M.E.A.
2. It was reported that the American Consul in Madras had sent a message wishing success to the South Zone Conference of the Hindu Mahasabha held in November 1950. Subsequently he had invited some members of the Party and discussed with them the Party's policies and programmes, particularly its advocacy of the nationalisation of industries. He was also reported to have told them that a rift in the Congress was expected with Patel and Tandon going to one side and Nehru and others joining the Socialist Party.

## 9. To Vijayalakshmi Pandit<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

February 13, 1951

Nan dear,

I have just received your letter of February 5th.<sup>2</sup> Even from this distance, we can have a fair idea of the hymn of hate against India which you are listening to all the time in the United States. This must be irritating, but I confess it does not affect me too much. It is being overdone and I feel sure that most Americans will soon regret it, provided we keep our heads and do not retaliate in any way. On the whole, our press has behaved fairly well in this matter thus far. So far as our Government is concerned, we shall pursue our policy and refuse to enter into any bitter controversy with the U.S. Yesterday I made a statement in Parliament,<sup>3</sup> a copy of which has been sent to you. The tone and content of this statement will give you a fair idea of how we deal with such matters.

I am quite convinced that any country or any individual that functions in a hysterical way, as the U.S. is doing now, injures its own cause. Whatever American reactions might be, in England and in Europe generally, this kind of thing is not appreciated. In England of course there is a good deal of feeling against the U.S. in all parties. I wonder if you saw a recent article by G.D.H. Cole in the *New Statesman and Nation* of February 3rd. It is entitled 'As a Socialist sees it'. This article is a breakthrough from the curtain of silence that had been more or less observed by responsible people in England. It represents a large section of opinion. More particularly, there is resentment in England at the way the U.K. is made to become a kind of camp-follower of the U.S.A.<sup>4</sup>

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

2. Vijayalakshmi Pandit stated: "The hymn of hate against India continues at a high pitch and a large section of the press is devoted to arguments in support of rejecting India's request for foodgrains."

3. See, *ante*, pp. 502-509.

4. Cole said, *inter alia*, "I could not contemplate any solution of the Korean question that would involve permanent American intervention in the Asian continent ... when the Americans did intervene in arms, and appealed to U.N. I felt their action entirely wrong; and I held other countries, including Great Britain, should have refused to support them ... I would ask those ... whether they really mean we must blindly follow the Americans even when American policy, instead of keeping us out of world war, appears to be landing us right into it."



It appears that the U.S. Congress will give its consent to a food gift to India, to begin with, of one million tons.<sup>5</sup> It would be rather silly for us to refuse this in a huff. Not only do we need it badly but, what is more important, we must not act merely in irritation. The point is that we must not allow our general approach and policy to be affected by such a gift. I thought it necessary therefore to make a clear declaration of our policy yesterday. I did not refer to the food gift.

Whatever we may feel like doing, there is no doubt that a gift of this kind does create some obligation. Americans are not very subtle in such matters, like the British, and they are apt to talk about that obligation and sometimes even insist on some kind of repayment. It is our intention to make a partial payment, but I cannot be definite about this till we know how matters stand.<sup>6</sup>

Then there is the question of the U.S. Government coming into the picture in India<sup>7</sup> for two purposes: (1) to observe how this grain is distributed and (2) to have some say as to how the money realised from it is used in productive schemes. I do not like this very much, and yet I do not quite know how we can say no to it. Much will depend upon how the request is put to us. We shall consider it then.

I am glad to know that Dorothy Norman has done a good job for us.<sup>8</sup> I have been wanting to write to her for a long time, but somehow I have not managed to do so. Norman Cousins who, I believe, is some kind of a cousin of hers, is coming to lunch with us tomorrow. Two or three days later Lilienthal will be arriving.<sup>9</sup>...

5. On 12 February, President Truman asked the U.S. Congress to authorise supply of two million tons of grains for India and recommended that the Congress should appropriate funds to buy only one million tons and defer the remainder until situation in India became clearer. The grains were to be given on a grant basis with India paying for transportation. On 15 February 1951, the bill proposing that the U.S.A. give India two million tons of wheat was introduced in the House of Representatives and the Senate.
6. President Truman in his proposal expected India to deposit in a special account local currency equivalent to the proceeds from the sale in India of the grains supplied on a grant basis. The account would be used for the development and improvement of the Indian economy.
7. President Truman in his address to the U.S. Congress also proposed to send a mission to India under Economic Cooperation Administration to observe distribution of the grains, assist in carrying out the programme, make on the spot appraisal of full extent of Indian needs, and examine other supply possibilities and terms upon which additional grains should be supplied from the U.S.A.
8. Vijayalakshmi Pandit wrote: "Her Food for India Emergency Committee ... has certainly been responsible for influencing the State Department and lining up support in the House and Senate" in the matter of wheat grant to India.
9. David Lilienthal, the former chairman of the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission and the Tennessee Valley Authority arrived in New Delhi on 15 February for a study tour of Indian river systems and their economic possibilities at the invitation of the Government of India. He stayed with Nehru.

Kashmir will be coming up at Lake Success soon.<sup>10</sup> I spoke about it at some length in Parliament yesterday. Opinion against us has been whipped up in the U.S. and in some other countries. That is no reason why we should adopt a defeatist or apologetic attitude. We have nothing to apologise for. The main thing is to keep our tempers and not allow ourselves to be put out by other people's passion and hysteria.

With love from  
Jawahar

10. The Anglo-American resolution on Kashmir was introduced in the Security Council on 21 February 1951.





**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS****I. Bilateral Relations****(ii) Burma**





1. To Thakin Nu<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

November 28, 1950

My dear Thakin Nu,

It was a great pleasure to have your Foreign Minister here and to discuss various matters of foreign policy with him.<sup>2</sup> I attach the greatest importance to discussions between our two countries in regard to foreign affairs, as it is my earnest desire that we should cooperate in them as far as possible. On the whole, our interests and outlook approximate and there can be no doubt that our cooperation in this respect will be helpful to both our countries as well as to the cause of peace generally.

The international situation is exceedingly grave and there appears to be little chance of its improving. I think that some of the Western countries have taken many false steps, the most important of these being the successful attempt to keep out China from the U.N. Now China appears to have a mounting war fever. With this psychology on both sides, the drift towards war is rapid. Nevertheless we have to continue to try our best to prevent large-scale war from taking place. Such a war can only end in the greatest disaster for all concerned.

We are, therefore, resolutely trying to follow a policy to this end, though it becomes more and more difficult and it may not produce any effective result.

Apart from the major situation in the Far East, we have got two other grave problems to deal with, those of Tibet and Nepal. Both are ticklish. I shall not discuss these or other problems here. But I should like to acquaint you, through our Ambassador<sup>3</sup> or through your Ambassador<sup>4</sup> here, the main trends of our policy. I hope also that you will keep our Ambassador in touch with your own ideas in regard to world problems.

Probably I shall be going to London for the meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers early in January next.

I hope you are keeping well.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Sao Hkun Hkio (1912-1973); Member of the Burmese Constituent Assembly, 1947; Foreign Minister, 1950-58 and 1960-62; Deputy Prime Minister, 1956-58. He held talks with Nehru on 25 and 26 October 1950.

3. M.A. Rauf.

4. Maung Gye.



## 2. To Thakin Nu<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
November 28, 1950

My dear Thakin Nu,

India has had an unparalleled series of calamities and disasters during the past six or seven months. We are accustomed to failure of rains in some part or to floods. But to have vast floods over more than half India and at the same time a complete lack of rain, when it was most needed, over some other parts was something quite unprecedented. In addition to this, we had the great earthquake of Assam. The lack of rain in some parts has been so bad that it has completely ruined the harvest and it is not even possible to prepare for the next harvest.

The result of all this is a terrible lack of foodgrains, more especially of rice, because our main rice producing areas have been affected and near famine conditions are prevailing. Large-scale relief and distribution of food are being undertaken by Government. It is necessary for us to import substantial quantities of rice in the coming months. I hope it will be possible for you to help us in this matter.

Our Ministry of Food has already entered into a contract with your Government for the supply of 170,000 tons of rice during the period August 1950 to June 1951. Of this, 70,000 tons are likely to be shipped by the end of December 1950, leaving a balance of 100,000 tons for the period January to June 1951. In the new circumstances, this quantity is going to be wholly inadequate. (I might mention that our estimated loss of foodgrains is over four million tons.) We are of course trying to get as much as we can from Siam and other sources; but I am afraid that unless you come to our help and make a substantially higher quantity available to us, we are likely to be in great difficulties and we shall be unable to provide the minimum essential relief to our rice-eating population. I should like to have from Burma an additional 200,000 or 300,000 tons apart from the quantity already contracted for.<sup>2</sup> In view of the urgency of our need, I trust that you will find it possible to spare this quantity of rice for us and help us to overcome our grave and critical situation.

There was some conversation sometime ago between your Government and our Ambassador as regards the possibility of entering into a three or four-year contract for rice with minimum and maximum fixed. We have not heard anything from your Government as regards this matter. I shall be grateful if you will enquire into this also.

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Thakin Nu replied on 19 December that Burma could supply an additional 120,000 tons of rice against payment in commodities like gunnies and cotton yarn.

We shall gladly supply you with any further information or details that may be necessary. Our Ambassador in Rangoon will be supplied with full information and you can communicate with him or, if you like, with me directly.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### 3. To Thakin Nu<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 10, 1950

My dear Thakin Nu,

Thank you for your letter of December 5th, which your Ambassador handed to me personally. That letter has come at a time of very grave international crisis. A few days ago I addressed our Parliament on international affairs and, I understand, that your Ambassador has already sent you reports of two speeches<sup>2</sup> that I delivered on that occasion. These speeches will give you some idea of how we have felt about these recent developments.

2. I am afraid that the outlook is very dark. Occasionally one sees a little glimmer of hope, and then even that vanishes. The situation in the Far East is critical in every way, political and military. Certain recent developments in Europe are also tending to produce a crisis there. The decision by the Western Powers to build up a German army is objected to most strongly by the U.S.S.R. This is important enough to bring about a conflict. The U.S.S.R. will try to prevent any such build up and may even risk war to do so.

3. In the Far East, it seems to me that both the political and military policy of the U.S.A. has suffered grievously. It is small comfort to be able to say that we advised differently some months ago. Right from the beginning we have pointed out that it is not possible to settle the Korean problem without China's acquiescence. We pressed for China to be taken into the U.N. The U.S.A. opposed this and still opposes it. They do not seem to realise (although recent events should have proved this) that China today is a proud and powerful nation which does not easily tolerate insult. Power goes to the head. It has done so in the United States and it is doing so in China. Because of this, I see no way out in the Far East. We shall of course go on trying our utmost, but with ever-lessening hope.

1. J.N. Collection.

2. See *ante*, pp. 422-449.



4. At this critical moment it seems to me quite absurd to bring up resolutions in the U.N., naming any country as the aggressor. This can only lead to war. Therefore we have proposed that all that the U.N. should do is to ask for a ceasefire and negotiations. Once fighting stops, there is just some hope of a way out being found.

5. In the grave and difficult days that are coming, I hope that Burma and India will keep in close touch and will cooperate in the largest measure. There are obvious dangers in South-East Asia and we are both interested in safeguarding our countries against them. I wish it could be possible, even if world war breaks, to keep this South-East Asia region free from war.

6. You know that I have felt attracted to the idea of a South-East Asia Union,<sup>3</sup> about which you spoke to me sometime back. I felt then that any formal Union of this kind was not feasible at the time and would not bring the kind of results we were aiming at. All kinds of questions arise, more especially in the military sphere. These countries of South-East Asia do not count in the military sense and therefore to talk of military alliances is rather unreal. The countries, however, count a good deal from other points of view, although economically also they are very weak. Their mere numbers count and their will to freedom. It does make a difference as to whether these countries pull together or not. It is of great importance therefore that they should pull together. Any attempt at military alliances would not help any country much but would raise a hornets' nest around us. Just at the present moment, it would be a difficult undertaking because of the rapidly deteriorating international situation.

7. I think that the first step should be for these countries to have treaties of friendship, etc., between each two of them. In effect such treaties would be non-aggression pacts and would ensure peace in that area. It would also bring them nearer to each other and help in cooperation. Some talk of such a treaty of friendship is vaguely going on between India and Indonesia. We would gladly have such a treaty with Burma.

8. This would lay the foundation for mutual cooperation. We could build upon this later at a suitable opportunity.

9. I would greatly welcome the kind of solidarity that you envisage as between Burma, India, Pakistan, Ceylon and Indonesia. But the more I think of it, the more I realise the difficulties. Ceylon is too intimately attached to U.K. policy in regard to almost every matter for it to associate itself with another country. Indonesia is at present in a politically fluid state. It is nevertheless desirable for both Burma and India to have close relations with it.

3. In his letter of 5 December 1950, Thakin Nu wrote that he appreciated Nehru's sense of caution and his broad view in not agreeing to the idea of the South East Asian Union being pursued actively, but suggested that it be given consideration as the existing tense situation "calls for solidarity among India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Indonesia and Burma."

10. Then we come to Pakistan. I appreciate greatly the suggestion you have made.<sup>4</sup> But I fear that it is not feasible. We have struggled hard during these past three years to overcome the deep feeling of bitterness and conflict which have arisen since the Partition between India and Pakistan. That Partition itself was a terrible operation doing enormous injury to all concerned.

11. Pakistan took shape as a result of a narrow communal policy. It calls itself an Islamic State and has bitter hatred for India. It looks towards the Islamic countries of Western Asia and hopes to build up an Islamic bloc. Their policy has been completely opportunistic and, I regret to say, often rather crooked. Nevertheless I realise that in the context of history and geography, it is essential for India and Pakistan to be friendly. I have therefore tried my utmost to bring about these friendly relations. I have not succeeded, but I have not wholly failed either, and sometime or other we shall come nearer to each other. But this process will take time and cannot be hustled.

12. The Kashmir dispute is only one of the four major disputes between India and Pakistan. Recent attempts made by us to solve some of these disputes have failed. We shall go on trying. As regards Kashmir, I do not think it is possible for any other country to help. I am sure we would have solved this matter somehow but for the intervention of the Security Council and of the U.K. and the U.S.A. occasionally. The only way to solve it is for India and Pakistan to know that the burden is upon them and on no one else.

13. I shall not go into the history of the Kashmir dispute, as it is a long one. But I want to assure you that I have always tried to view this matter as dispassionately as possible.

14. I intend going to London for the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference at the beginning of January. And yet I am not quite certain that I shall go. No one knows what world developments might take place by that time.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. Thakin Nu had written, "The first difficulty that I see in the way of improvement of conditions affecting the five countries is the Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan", and asked "whether there is any practical way in which my Government, the people of Burma and I can assist you towards a settlement of this dispute."



#### 4. To Sao Hkun Hkio<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 17, 1950

My dear U Sao Hkun Hkio,

Thank you for your letter of the 8th December.<sup>2</sup> It was a great pleasure to have you here with us for a few days and to feel how closely akin we were to one another. I am very glad we had this opportunity of discussing the international situation which, since our meeting, has grown much worse. I am also glad that you could pay a visit to Kashmir,<sup>3</sup> even though for only a day or two.

I shall certainly convey your message to the Yuvaraj and the Prime Minister of Kashmir.

In these difficult days of international crisis, it is very important that we should keep in the closest touch with each other. It is a peculiar good fortune for us, and for me, that Thakin Nu should be the leader and Prime Minister of Burma and that I should have the privilege of his friendship. I have come to the conclusion that it makes a great deal of difference if those who are in a responsible position in their respective countries know and understand each other. For this reason also your visit here was very welcome and the personal factor in it is not only good by itself, but helps in the closer relationship of our two countries. Inevitably, these countries have to pull together.

I wrote, some days ago, to Thakin Nu and discussed the international situation with him.<sup>4</sup> Since then other developments have taken place. I am afraid these developments have not been really helpful. There is much talk of ceasefire in Korea and some settlement, but, as a matter of fact, there is not much hope of either. The attitude of China, in regard to some matters like Formosa, is adamant. The attitude of the U.S.A. is equally adamant and, in addition, somewhat hysterical. On the whole, there is more logic in the Chinese attitude, because they have the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations in regard to Formosa. But logic does not go very far in these days of fear and apprehension.

As you know, the thirteen Asian Powers have been going together at Lake Success. That is a good move, and I hope it will continue. But I am rather anxious as to what they might do. It is quite possible that they might entangle themselves in various difficulties and then be put in an embarrassing position. We have, therefore, warned our representative, B.N. Rau, to avoid commitments. The U.S.A. attitude is somehow to get China in the wrong and then declare

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Hkun Hkio expressed his "deepest gratitude for the extreme kindness and generous hospitality with which my party and I were received during our recent visit throughout India."

3. Hkun Hkio accompanied Nehru during his visit to Srinagar in October 1950.

4. See the preceding item.

her an aggressor. If this is done, then war is bound to follow. We have warned the U.K. and the U.S.A. about this. The U.K. understand our position and sympathise with it. But they are not prepared to go too far away from the U.S.A. In any event, I hope that Burma, India and some other Asian countries will function in close cooperation.

When you were here, we talked about a treaty of friendship between India and Burma, and you took some papers with you about it. Of course, our relations are much closer than even a treaty like this can produce.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, it would be a good thing to have such a treaty. The question arises whether this treaty should be something more than a treaty of friendship and whether it should be in the nature of a defensive alliance. I believe some such suggestion has been made in Burma. I feel that any kind of a military alliance would be very unwise at this juncture, apart from not doing good to any country. We are not military Powers. Our influence is of a different kind. We make a difference by keeping out of a war and thus having a wide area of peace in South and South-East Asia.

Besides, if there is talk of military alliances, this will immediately produce all kinds of repercussions and confuse the issues before the world. Because of this, right from the beginning, we have often said that we are not in favour of any military alliance. I feel that is the right policy for countries like India, Burma and Indonesia. I think the first step should be Treaties of Friendship between these three countries. That itself brings them nearer to each other in the world context. We should be in continuous consultation with each other so that, as far as possible, any step that we might take should be in common.

Our strength lies not in any aggressive action, but in keeping ourselves free from entanglements and from war. It is more of a moral strength than anything else. If we talk in terms of military alliances, that moral strength lessens, without producing any alternative strength.

As you must know, we have suffered a heavy blow in the death of our Deputy Prime Minister, Sardar Patel. He was a tower of strength to us.

With all good wishes to you,

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

5. In his letter Hkun Hkio expressed the hope that, in view of the deteriorating international situation, his "wishes to bring about even closer the already existing close relationship between our two countries will be realized in the immediate future."



## 5. To Thakin Nu<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 30, 1950

My dear Thakin Nu,

I am writing to you on the eve of my departure from Delhi for England. I am going away at an awkward time, but perhaps my visit to London might do some good.

I wrote to you a few days ago about the international situation.<sup>2</sup> I need not tell you that we are very much concerned about the Burma-Chinese border. This is an even more immediate concern for you. Our Ambassador has told us that there is no great chance of China sending her troops across that border. Probably your Ambassador in Peking<sup>3</sup> has reported likewise. I received today by telegram from Panikkar, our Ambassador in Peking, a message that was conveyed to him by the Chinese Foreign Office. This message runs as follows:

There are no problems between Asian countries like China, India and Burma which cannot be solved through normal diplomatic channels. Burmese Ambassador was anxious about the new map of China which he said included certain portions of Burmese territory. I told him that People's Government had no time to draw new map and had only reproduced old map and expressly indicated this. Sino-Burmese border has been shown as undemarcated boundary and we see no difficulty in sitting down together and demarcating boundary. China has no territorial ambitions.<sup>4</sup>

This is, to some extent, satisfactory. So far as we are concerned, we shall make it clear in a friendly way, whenever necessity arises, that we are very much concerned with the security of the Burma-Chinese frontier. We want the Chinese Government to realise that any action there would bring complications with India. That might help also.

This approach is much better than the approach of some kind of a military alliance between India and Burma, as the latter would be a challenge to China and make it difficult for us to bring friendly pressure upon them.

With all good wishes to you for the New Year,

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

2. See *ante*, pp. 541-543.

3. Myint Thein.

4. This message was conveyed on 28 December by the Director, Asian Affairs, in the Chinese Foreign Office.

## 6. To M.A. Rauf<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 30, 1950

My dear Rauf,

...Regarding rice and other foodgrains, we are trying to import as much a quantity as the world will supply us. The difficulty is in getting it and even the greater difficulty is in shipping. Anyhow, we are going all out for it.

I can well understand the apprehension of the Burmese about a possible Chinese invasion. I do not think this at all likely but one can never be dead sure about anything. Panikkar has pointed out to us that it would be a good thing if it was known to China that any attack on Burma by China would be deeply resented in India and might bring about further complications for China. On the whole, China does wish to have the friendship of India. I agree with Panikkar but I do not quite know what steps we should take about it, apart from privately impressing upon the Chinese, which we shall certainly do. As I have told you, I am against any military alliance with Burma. But we should immediately go ahead with the treaty of friendship with Burma. In this connection, we can say a good deal informally but publicly which would show our deep interest in Burma's security. You might mention this matter to Thakin Nu and the Burmese Foreign Minister and tell them that we are very anxious to prevent any Chinese incursion in Burma. A military alliance might really have a contrary effect by making China distrust India. We will then not be able to influence her, but if we went ahead with a treaty of friendship and followed it up in some other ways, that would have good effect on China and on Burma.

All good wishes for the New Year.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

## 7. To Thakin Nu<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 8, 1951

My dear Thakin Nu,

Our Ambassador in Rangoon, Dr Rauf, has conveyed to me your wishes in regard to some kind of an approach being made to the Chinese Government to

1. J.N. Collection.



send out goodwill missions to Burma, India and Indonesia in order to allay fears and suspicions that are now prevalent. It is further suggested that before such missions are sent, Mao Tse-tung or Chou En-lai should make policy statements that the Chinese Government has no desire to interfere in the internal affairs of any of these countries and would respect their territorial integrity and that all disputes should be settled amicably and peacefully.

Some time back, the Chinese Government proposed an exchange of goodwill missions with us. They suggested that they might send such a mission to India and Burma some time in February or March, and that we might send our mission to China some months later. They also indicated that their mission would be largely cultural and would consist of about a hundred persons, including, I think, a theatre troupe.

We welcomed this idea of exchanging goodwill missions, but we did not think that a large mission coming in February or March to India would be convenient. We are terribly busy during this period because of the Budget session of Parliament and many other things, and it would have been difficult to arrange for a proper tour of a large mission during this period. We informed the Chinese Government therefore that we would prefer to have such a mission some time later in the year. There the matter stands.

I might add that even for political reasons we thought that this particular time was not appropriate for a big Chinese mission to come here. As you know very well, there is a very great deal of passion and prejudice and suspicion in the international field, and every little step has to be considered from that point of view. While discussions were taking place at Lake Success in regard to Korea and China and an attempt was being made (which later succeeded) at branding China as an aggressor, the visit of goodwill missions, followed naturally by speeches and statements, might well have been somewhat embarrassing to the parties concerned. It might not have been good either from the point of view of China or that of India and Burma.

India has taken up a definite attitude in regard to these resolutions in the United Nations and I am very glad indeed that Burma and India cooperated together fully in these matters.<sup>2</sup> I am convinced that the attitude our two countries have taken up has been the correct attitude both from the point of view of world peace and our own interests. That attitude, however, has been deeply resented in the U.S.A. specially and partly in some other countries. I do not mind that very much, though I regret it, because we must pursue the policy we consider right, even though that might displease others. The result of all this has been that our relations with China at the present moment are fairly good and friendly. We hope that they will continue to be friendly. For our part, we shall adhere to our policy. We have at the same time made it clear to the

2. See *ante*, p. 500.

U.S.A., the U.K. and other Governments that we are in no way hostile to them and we would like to continue our friendly relations with those countries also. Only we are convinced that our policy is the right policy and therefore we have to adhere to it.

It seems to me therefore that at the present moment the exchange of goodwill missions between China, Burma, India and Indonesia would serve no useful purpose and might even do some little harm in the international field. It would mean a challenge to some other countries and might almost appear as a prelude to a definite lining up with one bloc against the other. As you know, we desire to avoid this lining up and decide each question on the merits.

As for any policy statement to be issued by the Chinese Government in regard to our countries, I think that this would be unwise. You will remember that the Chinese Foreign Office told the Burmese Ambassador in Peking some time back that the maps they were using were old maps and have no sanctity behind them today. These maps show some parts of Burma and India as parts of the Chinese State. This naturally is objected to by both Burma and India. We knew, however, that these maps were very old maps and, so far as we were concerned, we ignored them completely in Chiang Kai-shek's days as well as later. We declared our policy quite clearly and publicly that our frontier with Tibet and China had been laid down previously and was represented by what is called the McMahon line. We would not tolerate any interference with that frontier. Having made that clear we did not think it necessary or desirable to approach the Chinese Government on this subject.

We adhere to this view and we think that any general policy statement by the Government of China would not advance matters any further. If they make such a statement and mention some countries in it, then the countries left out might be considered as marked for aggression, and this would create more difficulties. So far as we can see, there is no question of aggression by China on India, Burma or Indonesia. To discuss this matter is to attract public attention to something which is rather complicated, and thereby perhaps to increase the fears and suspicions which, to some extent, prevail today. Thus a statement made by China on this particular subject might not lead to the creation of that peaceful atmosphere which we desire. The Chinese Government has made rather general statements about their desire for friendly relations with India, Burma, etc. That is quite enough and we should not pursue this any further. Future developments will be governed largely by what happens in the Far East and our own policies.

The situation changes from day to day and it is difficult to foreshadow what is going to happen. The U.N. resolution passed recently has been most unfortunate and I fear will lead to a good deal of trouble in future. We have to watch this developing situation carefully and adapt ourselves to it. Meanwhile, we should maintain friendly relations with China and try to avoid saying or



doing anything which might worsen the international situation. In this India and Burma will, I hope, continue to cooperate as they have done in the past.

It is true that U.S. agencies are carrying on a propaganda of Chinese aggression and invasions. The United States policy today has little reason or logic behind it. It is based on some kind of a popular hysteria. We must not be swept away by it and we must keep calm whatever happens elsewhere. In India, I am glad to say, there is no real apprehension or fear of Chinese aggression. In Burma the position may not be quite so clear about this matter. Of that you are the best judge. But, if I may say so, the best remedy is to stress in public statements that we do not consider there is any chance of any Chinese aggression and therefore we are not afraid of it. We are friendly with China and the question of their aggression does not arise. Any other approach shows a certain nervousness which itself adds to those fears.

I do not think therefore that it is desirable for us to approach the Chinese Government in this matter. The position at present is fairly satisfactory and we should leave well alone.

With all good wishes to you,

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

I. Bilateral Relations

(iii) Indonesia





## 1. To A. Soekarno<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
November 28, 1950

My dear Soekarno,

... The international situation grows more and more complicated and dangerous. We try in India not to get excited and swept away and to work, insofar as possible, for the preservation of peace. Whether we succeed or not, we have to do our best, because world war will be a most terrible calamity. In the various problems that are facing the world, Indonesia and India have much in common and it is my earnest wish that we should keep in close touch with each other and consult each other frequently, so that we might cooperate to the greatest possible extent.

With all good wishes to you and Padma,

Yours very sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

## 2. To P. Subbarayan<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 17, 1950

My dear Subbarayan,<sup>2</sup>

Your letter of the 28th November about your interview with the Prime Minister of Indonesia,<sup>3</sup> when the question of Viet Minh and Viet Nam was discussed.

I have no objection whatever to any step being taken which might lead to a solution of the Indo-China problem. My difficulty is that I do not myself see what can be done at the present moment. Indo-China is bound up with the Far Eastern issues—Korea, China, Formosa, etc.—and I doubt if it can be dealt with entirely apart from them. That is to say, that neither China nor the U.S. will look at it separately. It is possible, of course, that Ho Chi Minh<sup>4</sup> and the French might be prepared to consider a proposal affecting them. But the French

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Ambassador to Indonesia.
3. Mohammad Natsir (b. 1908); Minister of Information, 1946-47; Prime Minister, 1950-51.
4. At this time President, Democratic Republic of Vietnam.



are tied up with the U.S. and, I take it, Ho Chi Minh will hardly take any step without consulting China.

We are at the present moment mixed up with discussions in Lake Success and in Peking and Washington regarding ceasefire in Korea and a settlement of the Far Eastern issue. We cannot undertake any other task which will confuse this major question, but we would welcome Indonesia to make soundings, and if there is any chance of success we shall gladly support Indonesia.

The general situation is very far from satisfactory, and I fear that we are drifting towards a major conflict. Probably this will not take place in the near future, but on both sides there is a hardening; both suspect each other and are not prepared to take chances. Obviously, if the major conflict approaches, Indo-China cannot remain out of it. Nevertheless, it may be worthwhile for Indonesia to sound both Ho Chi Minh and the French in regard to some step towards settlement.

I remember the proposal in the Indonesian Parliament that an Asian conference might be called on Indo-China. I did not see then how an Asian conference by itself could deal with this question which is intimately connected with European and American nations. The conference cannot be on a non-official level, as such questions are not decided in that way. On an official level it would mean some Asian Governments meeting together. Some of these Asian countries will probably keep out anyhow, because they are too much under the influence of the Great Powers. I think that there should be cooperation among Asian countries, but the calling of a conference will not help this very much. It might even hinder it and produce complications.

I entirely agree with Dr Natsir that we should aim at limiting the spread of the war mentality. Indeed, we should try that even in the event of war. We should keep a large area in South and South-East Asia unaffected by actual warfare. In this India, Indonesia, Burma and possibly Pakistan might help. I am not sure of Pakistan because of Pakistan's commitments to the U.S. The best thing is for us to keep in close contact and cooperate in regard to any step that might be taken, but the situation is so delicate and explosive that one is afraid of taking a wrong step, which might make matters worse. Indeed, we are rather nervous of what is being done at Lake Success now at the instance of B.N. Rau.<sup>5</sup> This might well be utilised by one party or the other to advance its own position and not to help the cause of peace. That is not our intention. Any proposals made, if they are rejected by one party, lead to difficulties. Therefore, we should be cautious in our proposals and as informal as possible. If the reactions are favourable, we can take a further step.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

5. See *ante*, pp. 453-454.



AT DELHI AIRPORT ON RETURN FROM LONDON, 22 JANUARY 1951





AT THE SRI LANKAN HIGH COMMISSION ON SRI LANKAN INDEPENDENCE DAY,  
NEW DELHI, 4 FEBRUARY 1951

### 3. To P. Subbarayan<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

December 23, 1950

My dear Subbarayan,

...The situation in the Far East and the world generally is fast deteriorating and I fear that the chances of peace are getting less and less. In some matters the Chinese Government have behaved, I think, wrongly. But the responsibility on the whole for this progressive deterioration rests on the U.S.A. Their refusal to recognise a great and strong country like China was not only unrealistic but foolish. You cannot ignore a patent fact. No question in the Far East is going to be decided without China's concurrence. The biggest stumbling block now is Formosa. China has the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations as well as President Truman's statement in January last to support her claim. The U.S. are backing out of this and hence all this trouble. I am trying hard to induce the U.K. Government to bring pressure on the U.S. Meanwhile war fever is mounting up both in China and the U.S.

Our policy will continue to be one of avoidance of war and seeking peace. If unfortunately war comes, we shall try to keep out of it. It will be something if an area in Asia is kept free from world war. As I understand it, this is Indonesia's attitude also and most probably Burma's.

In your letter of the 12th December you refer to Mr Natsir's question about New Guinea.<sup>2</sup> It is very difficult for me to advise in regard to a matter which has raised so much excitement in Indonesia. But since Mr Natsir wants my opinion, all I can say is that an open break with the Dutch should be avoided.<sup>3</sup> The U.S. and U.K. will most probably side with the Dutch if such a break occurs. This has nothing to do with the merits of the question, but is a result of the world situation. Any decision taken therefore should keep in mind that Indonesia will not get support from the Great Powers. Everything will be judged from the point of view of the big conflict that is feared. In these circumstances Indonesia should go rather warily and not bring about a definite break. As to what precise proposals they might put forward, it is very difficult

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

2. Dutch rule in the East Indies ended on 27 December 1949 with transfer of sovereignty by the Netherlands to the United States of Indonesia; but it was agreed that the territory of Dutch New Guinea should remain under the control of the Netherlands for a year pending final determination of its status by negotiations between Indonesia and Holland.

3. A special conference on the future of Dutch New Guinea, opening in The Hague on 4 December 1950, ended on December 27 in complete deadlock as Indonesia refused to modify and the Netherlands to admit the former's claim to sovereignty over the disputed territory.



for me to say. They cannot obviously give up their claim to Dutch New Guinea. If no suitable formula is arrived at, it is better to prolong these conversations or postpone them for a while.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

#### 4. To Raghu Vira<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 27, 1951

My dear Raghu Vira,<sup>2</sup>

Your letter of the 26th February with its enclosures.

I am quite clear in my mind that the work you wish to undertake in cooperation with European and any other scholars is significant and worth doing, both from the point of view of Indonesia and India, and indeed of the rest of the world also. But, as I told you, I am very anxious that there should be no misunderstanding in Indonesia about this. They are a new independent nation, full of pride in themselves. They do not like to be reminded that they are a cultural colony of any other nation, more specially of India. They do not like to be told that all their culture is derived from India. Therefore, the stress on India has to be avoided and the matter has to be dealt with purely from the point of view of Indonesia and the world's scholarship.

We are sending your papers to our Ambassador in Djakarta. It would be better, however, for the approach to the Indonesian Government to be made by Dr Soedarsono, the Ambassador of Indonesia here. That approach should be, as I have said, from the point of view of scholarship and not of Indian culture. I am sure that when you go to Indonesia, our Ambassador will give you every help.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.
2. An Indologist.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

I. Bilateral Relations

(iv) Other Countries





## 1. India and East Africa<sup>1</sup>

I have read Apa Pant's letter.<sup>2</sup> Obviously, the situation requires very careful handling and we must go a little slow. We cannot set ourselves up in East Africa as an agitational agency. We have to function as diplomats. At the same time, it is clear that we have to maintain contacts at all levels with the African people and try to help them without getting involved in any difficulty.

2. It is not possible to give precise advice to our representative. In our general declarations about Indians and Africans we can go far as we have already done. In actual work, we have to go a little slow insofar as contacts with mass organisations, etc., are concerned. It is for us to advise Indians privately to develop these contacts and not for our representative himself to have them.<sup>3</sup>

3. I think Apa Pant should be told that Mr Fenner Brockway is a good and earnest man, but he has no position in the British Labour Party. His judgment is supposed to be very bad and, for many years, he was kept out of the Labour Party. His enthusiasms often overshoot the mark. Therefore, Apa Pant should be a little careful. On no account must he use Fenner Brockway's name in connection with our work or with me.<sup>4</sup>

4. There is also no question of his giving any money to African organisations.<sup>5</sup> He may occasionally suggest it to some non-official Indians there to give help where it is desirable.

1. Note to Secretary, Commonwealth Relations, M.E.A., 27 October 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Apa Pant, Commissioner for the Government of India in British East Africa, reported that the nationalist Africans of Uganda and Kenya were seeking the Indian Mission's "advice and guidance in various respects including education, commerce, as well as political matters" making the Governments of those territories suspicious. Pant felt that to help and sponsor the development of Africans on the right lines was the duty of the Mission.
3. Pant wrote that after a deputation from the African Farmers' Union of Uganda saw him for negotiations with Indians in Uganda regarding reorganisation of arrangements for ginning their cotton in the ginneries owned by Indians and definite concessions regarding transport facilities and ginning charges, he had held talks with leaders of the Indian community in Uganda and advised them and the African deputation to hold discussions in the matter.
4. Brockway, after a visit to Uganda and Kenya, felt that Indians and Africans in Uganda were divided because Indian monopoly in trading activities, especially in cotton, was disliked by Africans. He suggested to Pant negotiations between the two races in Uganda to bring them together and wrote to Nehru to send a letter to Pant supporting cooperation between Indians and Africans.
5. Pant reported that the African Farmers' Union deputation had sought funds from the Indian Mission and he had told them that it would be wrong for them to take money from outside for financing their movement.



5. There is also no question of Indians renouncing their interests in Africa. What they should do is to associate Africans with them as far as possible and to train Africans. The whole point is that the approach should be friendly and cooperative.

## 2. India and Spain<sup>1</sup>

Whatever the logic of this matter might be, it is one of those issues that has raised and still raises strong passions. We should not at present take any steps to enter into diplomatic relations with Spain.<sup>2</sup>

1. Note, 31 December 1950. File No. 6(2)-Eur I/50, M.E.A.
2. On 5 November 1950, the General Assembly revoked its recommendation of 12 December 1946 calling on U.N. members to withdraw their Ambassadors and Ministers from Madrid as long as Franco remained in power. India abstained during the voting and was approached by Spain for reconsideration of her decision.

## 3. Indians in Sri Lanka<sup>1</sup>

This resolution<sup>2</sup> is another such resolution in which it has to be seen whether A.I.C.C. can issue condemnation or direction to another nation. It will create complications if the A.I.C.C. gives detailed direction about executive matters. That applies in a far greater measure to international affairs. We are apt to forget that in dealing with Ceylon, in spite of very close contacts, cultural and geographical, we have to deal in effect with an independent nation. It is not likely to help much if the A.I.C.C. issues condemnation of another nation's policy or gives specific directions in regard to it. Originally, the Ceylon Indian Congress had boycotted the proposals of the Ceylon Government and refused

1. Speech at a meeting of the A.I.C.C., Ahmedabad, 31 January 1951. *Congress Bulletin*, January-February 1951.
2. The resolution requested the Central Government to take immediate action to secure full citizenship rights to all Indians, who had been in Sri Lanka before 1949 and had completed five years' residence, and to their dependants.

to register their people under the new Act as Ceylon nationals,<sup>3</sup> because they felt that the proposals did not go far enough. But after a while they reversed the decision and the Ceylon Government also varied its policy to a slight extent by somewhat changing the interpretation of the law they had passed previously in regard to birth.<sup>4</sup> So there was a kind of understanding arrived at and Indians started getting registered. I do not know the exact number. The main point is that the Ceylon Government and the Ceylon Indian Congress have tried in spite of difficulties to follow a certain policy. I have no doubt that the policy is not being applied always as it should be and difficulties arise. The Indian Government is greatly interested in this matter and through our High Commissioner we have repeatedly drawn the attention of the Ceylon Government to the position as seen by us. But it is to be kept in mind that in dealing with the Ceylon Government we are dealing with a foreign government through our diplomatic mission. I do not know how under those circumstances it is desirable or profitable for the A.I.C.C. to pass a resolution of the type that is suggested. I think that it is for the Ceylon Indian Congress to take a lead in the matter and the A.I.C.C. can then think of supporting that lead. I think it becomes very difficult for the A.I.C.C. to go about championing a people who consider themselves Ceylon nationals. There are legal difficulties and political exigencies and I appeal to the mover to withdraw the resolution.

3. An applicant for registration under the Indian and Pakistani Residents' (Citizenship) Act of 1949 had to prove that he was continuously resident in Sri Lanka for seven to ten years, depending upon his marital status, and that he was a person (a) whose origin was in any territory which formed part of British India or any Indian State before Independence, and (b) had emigrated therefrom and permanently settled in Sri Lanka, or was a descendant of such a person.
4. By the Indian and Pakistani Residents' (Citizenship) Amendment Act of 1950, the Sri Lankan Government relaxed the rules in favour of Indians and Pakistanis born in Sri Lanka if they could prove that they had permanently settled in Sri Lanka.





EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

II. French Settlements in India





1. To Fenner Brockway<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
November 27, 1950

Dear Fenner,

I have your letter of the 21st November.

Our own information is that the French authorities continue to harass and intimidate people in the French areas in India. We have drawn the attention of the French Government to this. The whole question of the plebiscite<sup>2</sup> is hung up because of our objections.<sup>3</sup> We have made it clear that we will not recognise a plebiscite unless it is conducted to our satisfaction.

I do not think it will serve any useful purpose for this matter to be taken to the U.N. in any way. I would not advise you, therefore, to make any such suggestions to the British Delegation of the U.N. It is better that the matter should be dealt with directly between the Government of India and the French Government.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

2. The French National Assembly in February 1950 decided to hold a referendum in the French settlements of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam, on whether the inhabitants wished to remain in the French Union or to join the Indian Republic.

3. The Government of India were not satisfied that essential conditions for holding a free and fair referendum in the French settlements, viz., amnesty for political prisoners, equal opportunities for propaganda for all parties and cessation of official interference in politics, had been fulfilled.





EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

III. Indian Missions Abroad





## 1. On Diplomatic Correspondence<sup>1</sup>

I have been noticing that telegrams sent from our Ministry, as well as telegrams received by us from our foreign missions, have a tendency to grow longer and longer. Often telegrams are sent when an air mail letter would be good enough. Some telegrams deal with exceedingly trivial matters. Most of them are verbose and lack all conciseness. They resemble chatty letters, with an attempt sometimes at cleverness of phrasing. It appears to be completely forgotten that it is a telegram that is being sent and not a letter. Even an official letter should have conciseness and should be as brief as possible, consistent with clarity.

2. In any event, and at any time, these instructions should be followed. At the present moment, when every attempt is being made to economise, it is doubly necessary for us to be strict about our telegrams. I know that the attention of our foreign missions has been drawn to this fact and savingsgrams now sometimes substitute telegrams. That is good. But it is not quite good enough and it does not seem to have affected much either the frequency or the length of the telegrams sent or received by us.

3. In the world as it is today, with crisis following crisis, time is important and telegrams have to be sent. These telegrams have to be clear, or otherwise they would not serve their purpose. Admitting all this, nevertheless, there is a very great need for improvement. The tendency to send off a long telegram as soon as a bright idea suggests itself should be checked. In drafting a telegram, every unnecessary word should be struck out and everything that can be said in an air mail letter should also be struck out.

4. I have just seen an extract from a minute which Mr Winston Churchill wrote as Prime Minister to the Foreign Secretary in 1941, that is, in war time. This extract is equally applicable here and I am, therefore, giving it below:

Please let me know what can be done about the length of telegrams. I feel this is an evil which ought to be checked. Ministers and Ambassadors abroad seem to think that the bigger the volume of their reports home, the better is their task discharged.... The idea seems to be to keep up a continuing chat which no one ever tries to shorten. I suggest that you should issue a general injunction, but that, in addition, telegrams which are unduly verbose or trivial, should be criticised as such and their authors told: 'This telegram was too long.' It is sheer laziness not compressing thought into a reasonable space.

1. Note to the Foreign Secretary and Secretary, Commonwealth Relations, 30 November 1950. File No. 2(215)/48-PMS.



5. With the development of the air mail system, the necessity for telegrams is considerably less than it used to be. In India, most of the important places are served by night airmail service. In effect, a night airmail letter reaches its destination sometimes even sooner than a telegram. There is no point, therefore, in sending a telegram in India to any place connected by the night airmail service. It must be remembered that sending telegrams in code means delay at either end in coding and decoding, which often takes more time than an ordinary letter sent by air. It should also be remembered that owing to excess of work in our Cypher Bureau, telegrams take much longer to decode and deliver or to code and send. Our Cypher Bureau has had to face very heavy work during the past weeks and months. Owing to these delays, often the advantage of sending a telegram itself goes.

6. In this connection, it might also be remembered that trunk telephone calls are to be avoided unless they are absolutely necessary.

7. I suggest that this note of mine, with such other instructions as you may think necessary, might be sent to all our missions abroad and should be circulated in the various departments of External Affairs.

## 2. To Heads of Indian Missions Abroad<sup>1</sup>

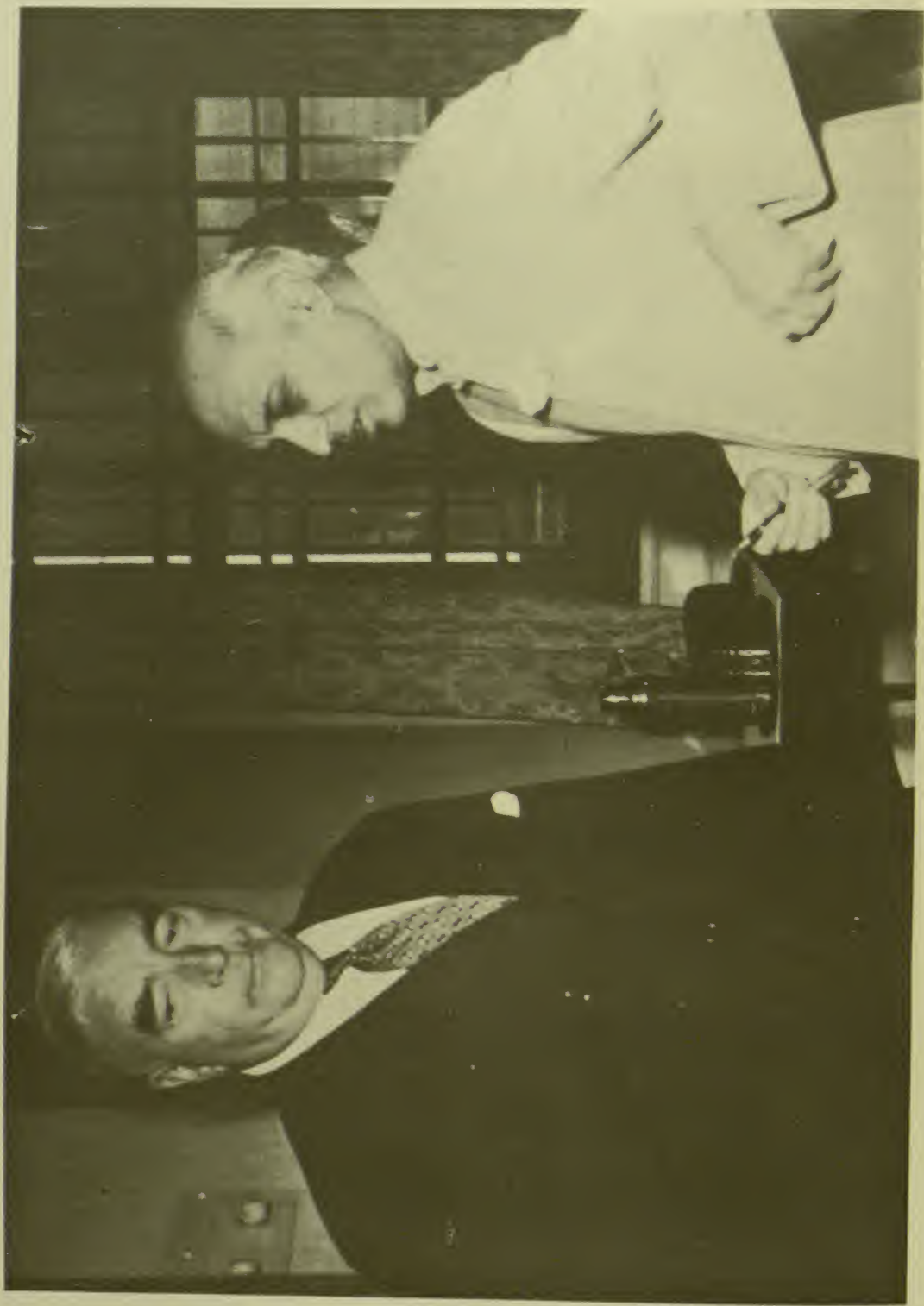
On the occasion of the first anniversary of the establishment of our Republic I send you and the members of your staff, as well as our countrymen abroad, my greetings and good wishes. We have passed through a year of difficulty and the future, whether in India or the world, holds little promise of relief. That is all the more reason for us to hold together and strive with all our strength to overcome these difficulties. In international affairs India has laboured for peace and her efforts have borne some fruit. That is the most urgent problem of the day and to that all our Missions abroad must address themselves. On this day therefore we must pledge ourselves again to the service of India and of peace.

1. 26 January 1951. Published in all newspapers.



JAMSHEDPUR, NOVEMBER 1950





WITH K.G. MENZIES, PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA, NEW DELHI, 26 DECEMBER 1950

### 3. Reports from London<sup>1</sup>

...It is clear that we should have proper reports from the High Commissioner in London. And yet it is not particularly easy to suggest what kind of reports we should have. Many of the reports that come to us from our foreign missions are not particularly helpful. Some are very good. It is fairly easy to write a report from many of the lesser capitals or at any rate from many of the places where our activities are limited by various circumstances. It is not easy to write a report from London or Washington where such a report, if at all adequate, would have to cover a multitude of questions. Indeed, a report from London would have to be a report about almost every department of activity in which the Government of India is interested and further it would have to be a report on international affairs, dealing fully with all the developments and crises that follow one another. To prepare such a report would be a terrific business, if the report is meant to cover the field. That report will indeed be a book.

In Washington also a real report would have to cover much though not quite so much as in London. London happens to be a centre which concerns itself with a multitude of our activities.

We are in fairly intimate touch with London, insofar as telegrams are concerned and also letters. What then are we to do? The usual forms that are sent out for the guidance of Indian Missions abroad in regard to periodical reports do not seem to fit in at all with London. I think that the major departments of India House should submit their reports separately with the High Commissioner's comments, if any. In the circular letter dated 23rd January a list of the reports required is given. What exactly does the political report from London mean? It can only be a political survey of world events, with reference more especially to the U.K. The economic report would also be more or less of the same kind. A press report presumably means frequent reports or surveys of the press. I do not understand what a legislative and parliamentary report would mean. Are we to have a survey of the British Parliament?

It is hardly correct to say, as is said in Tyabji's note, that there is a great lacuna in our knowledge of Western affairs, in spite of the fact that we do not get any regular reports from India House.<sup>2</sup> We know a good deal about Western

1. Note to Secretary, Commonwealth Relations, 28 February 1951. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

2. Badruddin Tyabji, at this time a Joint Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, noted that neither periodical nor annual reports were being received from the High Commissioner in London with any regularity despite reminders, resulting in "a great lacuna in our knowledge of Western affairs, London being one of the main sources of information, and also the headquarters of our largest foreign Mission." He suggested that Nehru ask the High Commissioner to comply with instructions in this regard.



affairs, much more than about other parts of the world, because there is a continuous supply of information of various kinds and from various sources.

I suggest therefore that a letter be written to the High Commissioner pointing out to him that the absence of reports from our High Commission creates a big gap here and puts us in various difficulties. London being our largest foreign Mission and dealing with a great number of important problems, we should have some kind of regular reports. London is different from our other Missions and therefore instructions sent to them in regard to reports do not wholly apply to London. Perhaps a better course would be for each major department of India House to prepare a periodical report which could be sent here with the High Commissioner's comments on it. The High Commissioner might send an overall note or report.

It might be added that this suggestion is made in consultation with the Prime Minister. All reports from our Missions should be addressed to the Minister for External Affairs. Apart from the general reports sent, any head of Mission can write about more confidential matters separately and directly to the Minister for External Affairs.

#### 4. Financial Stringency<sup>1</sup>

The Prime Minister realises that many of our Missions abroad have had to limit their activities because we have not been able to supply them with adequate funds. Many of the junior members of our staff abroad have had to face grave difficulties.

2. Nevertheless it is not possible for us, in view of the grave financial situation, to afford any relief in this direction. Indeed we have been called upon to exercise the strictest economy. The staff at the Foreign Office is being reduced and we are continually giving thought to further economy both at headquarters and abroad. Some of our useful departments have had to be wound up. This applies to every Ministry of the Government of India.

3. The situation is a serious one and it is no good our complaining against it. The only way to face it is to adapt ourselves to it. It may even be necessary for us to reduce staff still further or even to take more radical steps. The Prime Minister would therefore request you to examine this matter with the greatest

1. Memorandum to all Heads of Indian Missions abroad, 28 February 1951. File No. 2(215)/48-PMS.

care and to suggest what further reductions in expenditure can be brought about.

4. Naturally we do not wish efficiency to suffer. It should be possible, by a rearrangement of our expenditure, to lay stress on more important activities at the expense of the less important.

5. The Prime Minister wrote sometime ago to all heads of Missions about the general standards that should be maintained in our Missions abroad.<sup>2</sup> In that connection he suggested the policy to be adopted in regard to the serving of alcoholic drinks. While leaving this matter to the discretion of the heads of missions, he made it clear that our general policy of avoidance of alcoholic drinks should always be kept in mind and, as far as possible, acted upon. We have to adapt ourselves to foreign ways in foreign countries to some extent. But it is more important that we function as Indians, following our own basic policies and methods, even in foreign countries.

6. It is necessary that the dignity of our country should be maintained abroad and that our Embassies and Legations should reflect that dignity and spirit. But it is wrong to think that this dignity or spirit is maintained by lavish display. Indeed such display is completely opposed both to public opinion in India and to the views of Government. We have no desire to compete in this respect with any other country. The old diplomatic tradition was of a high class, rather snobbish, elite, cut off from the common herd. That is out of date in most other countries and a new tradition is growing up, although traces of the old still continue. In any event that is totally inapplicable to India and India's representatives. It should always be remembered that India's great leader was Mahatma Gandhi who possessed neither title nor worldly goods and whose pride it was to live like the poorest in the land. Yet he was the essence of dignity and nobility. We cannot compete with him in his simplicity or his dignity or his nobility, but we can nevertheless learn much from him and we must avoid ostentatious display and every kind of wastefulness, while maintaining our dignity.

7. Heads of Missions have to maintain discipline. They should, however, treat their junior officers and other employees as colleagues in a common task and always bring in the human touch. They should also meet the common folk of the country they live in, in a human way as when meeting equals and not as if they are superiors and others are inferior. They should try to contact representatives of various sections of the people amongst whom they are living and not confine their contacts to high officials, ambassadors and other such like superior persons.

2. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 508-512.



8. The Prime Minister would like to draw the attention of heads of Missions to memoranda issued to all missions and posts abroad by the Ministry of External Affairs on the 21st September 1949 and the 14th November 1949 in regard to the use of honorifics and courtesy titles. Diplomatic convention sometimes necessitates the use of "His Excellency" in the case of Ambassadors and High Commissioners. This is strictly a formal matter and should be reserved for formal occasions only. It should not be used otherwise. There is an element of snobbery about its frequent use and this should be avoided. It must be remembered that the President of India is just the President and not his Excellency or anything else. On no account must members of the staff of an embassy normally address the Ambassador or the High Commissioner as His Excellency. He should be addressed formally as Mr Ambassador or Mr High Commissioner.

9. In telegrams no such honorifics or courtesy titles should be used. Nor should 'Honourable' or 'Mr' be used except when one is addressing a foreign Government. The use of these is totally unnecessary and a waste of public funds.

10. Telegrams should always be avoided when an air letter can serve the purpose. When telegrams are sent, they should be brief and concise.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

IV. General





## 1. Grading of Foreign Service Officers<sup>1</sup>

I have been thinking again about the graded list prepared for Foreign Service officers. I agree with the general principles laid down in the Secretary-General's note. But much depends of course on the application of those principles.

I do not know most of the persons included in the list and, therefore, can form no opinion. In regard to people taken from the Services, probably no difficulty arises. But in the case of people taken from the public generally, the question of grading them is not so simple. In regard to two or three names, I felt definitely that they were not put in the right place, both because of their age and their general aptitude and ability. Probably this might apply to some others also.

I think that it is very important that our Foreign Service must not lose itself in the ruts of seniority. Inevitably seniority has to be considered because it represents experience. But mere experience is not enough. There is to be ability and the kind of thing which distinguishes a person from others in his work. I have had a good deal of experience of the Army in India. This Army has quite a number of bright young officers. This brightness is not always in evidence near the top. We are thus always having to face a difficulty. Some senior officers not only are not particularly suitable themselves, but they come in the way of others who could do the work better. People capable of distinguishing themselves thus get no chance and are stunted and the level goes down somewhat. In theory, senior appointments must go to those who are found to be most capable and suitable. In practice, seniority usually carries the day with unfortunate results. There is a continuous tussle between seniority and ability.

The Army has to suffer by its past. There is no reason why the Foreign Service, which has no past, should burden itself with the traditions of the pasts of other Services. More than in any other service, the Foreign Service requires a peculiar aptitude, which not many people possess. This cannot always be found at the moment of selection. It is only after some experience that one can judge.

Therefore it seems to me very necessary that we should lay down clearly and let it be known that in the Foreign Service here, as in other countries, promotions will not be automatic, but will depend on ability and the record of the individual concerned.

In grading now, we are, to some extent, tying down people. Care therefore must be taken that we do not do this in a manner which may encourage mediocrity and dullness at the expense of more desirable qualities. Differences may not

1. Note to the Secretary-General, M.E.A., 26 October 1950. J.N. Collection.



be very marked, but sometimes an individual stands out and he must be given preference and advancement.

In looking through the lists, I felt that two or three men were not properly graded, both because of their age and general experience and record. I was told that there are some others too, taken from the public, who were equally entitled to special considerations. If that is so, all these special cases should be carefully examined and a proper place in the list allotted to them.

## 2. To B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
November 17, 1950

My dear B.N.,

Your letter of November 13th. Events move so fast that letters are rather out of date.

I am more convinced than ever that we must not allow ourselves to be swept away by any pressure tactics of other Powers, whatever the subject may be. We want to be friendly with other countries. But the issues are much too serious for us to play about with them or to support something, against our own views, just to please somebody. The way American politics are run is not to my liking and the present hysterical atmosphere in the U.S. is not conducive to good judgement. Personally, I think that this business of passing resolution after resolution in the Security Council or the Assembly is not particularly helpful. I suppose it is meant to get some kind of constitutional backing for any action to be taken. The real thing to decide is the objective aimed at—peace or war. Of course people want peace everywhere; nevertheless Governments are driven towards war, partly by their own policies and partly by events. To talk of peace as if it was appeasement is dangerous nonsense and I do not think we should submit to this kind of thing.

The U.K. follows a curious and vacillating policy, trying to influence the U.S.A. but ultimately being influenced by it for obvious reasons. Where Pakistan interests are concerned, such as Kashmir, they follow definitely a pro-Pakistan policy.

I think we should be very careful in matters relating to Korea and China. Our general policy in regard to Korea has been justified and people realise

1. B.N. Rau Papers, N.M.M.L.

that. But Tibet coming into the picture has somewhat upset Indian opinion. We have taken up a firm, but dignified, attitude towards China in regard to Tibet. We received China's reply to our last note today. The tone is better than that of the previous one, but the content is much the same. I do not know if Tibet will come up before the Security Council or elsewhere. We have already sent you our general instructions in the matter.<sup>2</sup> I do not think anything should be said, as far as possible, to make the gap between us and China wider. To some extent, this may not be possible.

I have a strong feeling that the future of Asia is rather tied up with the relations between India and China. I see that both the U.S.A. and the U.K. on the one hand and the U.S.S.R. on the other, for entirely different reasons, are not anxious that India and China should be friendly towards each other. That itself is a significant fact, which has to be borne in mind.

We have to remember that China has passed through terrible experiences during the past thirty or forty years and their present mentality is the outcome of these experiences. They are suspicious and both afraid and a little arrogant. American policy and statements have been far from helpful and indeed have often been exceedingly irritating to the Chinese.

In regard to the Far East, it is quite clear that there are only two choices: big-scale war with all its consequences and an attempt to have some measure of cooperation with China in the settlement of the Korean and nearby problems. There is no escape from these two alternatives.

The position in Nepal is troubling us and is very peculiar. In this matter we do not like the idea of any foreign Power interfering. There is a tendency on the part of the U.K. to do so. But we are trying to check it. The U.K. Ambassador in Nepal is an exceedingly reactionary type and is doing a lot of mischief. So far as we are concerned, we have no intention of accepting any solution, which means a complete reversion of the old regime. We propose to insist on major changes and, very probably, to stand by the old King. It is quite possible that the insurgents will be driven out of the places they have occupied and otherwise pushed about. But this will not mean an end of the trouble and there is likely to be guerilla warfare. I do not think there can be any peace in Nepal now except on a basis different from that of the past. The old Rana regime cannot be allowed to continue. So far as the fighting, etc., is concerned, we are keeping studiously apart and have stopped all movements of armed people across the border, either way. But our sympathies are entirely on the side of liberal reform.

Regarding Kashmir, I am a little tired of the intrigues and various moves of the U.K., the U.S.A., etc. I have lost interest in them. If the U.K. are afraid of doing anything which might displease Pakistan, they are at perfect liberty to

2. See *ante*, pp. 339-340.



do what they like. But it should be made perfectly clear to them that we are not prepared to change our position in the slightest degree, whether it pleases Pakistan or the U.K. or not. Pakistan propaganda about war and *jehad* has been vulgar and indecent in the extreme. On our side no attempt has been made even to answer it. But this does not mean that we are in the least weakening on this issue. It is no good the U.K. or the U.S.A. telling us that Kashmir is a dangerous spot and therefore we must give in. If somebody has to give in, it will not be India and they might as well know that clearly and without any reservation. This Kashmir business would have been settled long ago but for the pro-Pakistan attitude and activities of the U.K. and some other countries.

The South African debate is going on now.<sup>3</sup> I am not very excited about it and it does not make too much difference whether we get the requisite majority or not. Of course I should like to get that majority. But the value of a resolution of the U.N.<sup>4</sup> in this matter is not very great. I am anxious, however, that our point of view should be put firmly and plainly and that there should be no weakening on it.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. On 14 November, Vijayalakshmi Pandit moved a resolution in the ad hoc committee of the General Assembly recommending to the South African Government "all steps necessary to bring its treatment of people of Indian origin in South Africa into conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter and the Declaration of Human Rights." The resolution also noted "with regret" the enactment of the Group Areas Act by the Union Government as contrary to previous resolutions on the issue.
4. On 20 November, the ad hoc committee adopted a resolution moved by Bolivia and four other countries in amended form calling for round-table discussions between India, Pakistan and South Africa, and the appointment of a U.N. mediator if the parties failed to reach agreement, and asking the Union Government not to implement the Group Areas Act. India accepted this resolution in place of her own resolution.

### 3. Cable to B.N. Rau<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram DGA 195 dated 11th December. Draft resolution on international control of atomic energy considerable advance on previous resolutions in that it recognises connection between atomic weapons and conventional armaments

1. New Delhi, 12 December 1950. J.N. Collection.

for purposes of disarmament. Mere appointment of committee does not take us far but is step in right direction.<sup>2</sup> You may therefore sponsor resolution.

2. It would be great gain if there was agreement not to have mass bombing of cities. Also some kind of limited inspection of armaments. If it is not possible to include this in resolution, you can mention it in speech.

3. Korean war has demonstrated that mass bombing or even atomic warfare is not so decisive as was supposed. This is resulting in change of military opinion and in case of world war, mass bombing likely to be far more dangerous for Western countries than for Russia or China. Hence American opinion more likely to accept now limitation suggested than they would have done previously. It must be remembered that mass bombing of cities was not considered legitimate till later stages of last World War.

2. The eight-Power resolution sponsored by Australia, Canada, Ecuador, France, the U.K., the Netherlands, Turkey and the U.S.A. recommended establishment of a twelve-member committee which would consider and report to the next session of the Assembly "ways and means whereby the work of the Atomic Energy Commission and the Commission for Conventional Armaments may be coordinated and on the advisability of their functions being merged and placed under a new and consolidated disarmament commission." This resolution was adopted by the Assembly on 13 December.

#### 4. The Commonwealth<sup>1</sup>

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have met here tonight, as you all know, to welcome and do honour to the Prime Minister of Australia, whom we have the good fortune to have for a few days in Delhi. If I may say so, it was a happy thought on his part to break his journey here in Delhi,<sup>2</sup> though for a short period, on his way to the Conference which is going to meet soon in London and where we shall meet again in a few days' time. I am glad about it because it has given an opportunity to us to meet not only the Prime Minister but the leader of Australia at the present juncture and exchange thoughts with him on the eve of important happenings.

We are members of the Commonwealth—that rather strange and odd collection of nations which seems to prosper most in adversity. It is an odd

1. Speech at the State banquet to R.G. Menzies, the Prime Minister of Australia, at New Delhi, 26 December 1950. P.I.B.

2. R.G. Menzies was in Delhi from 25 to 27 December on his way to the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in London.



collection and somehow it has found some kind of invisible link by seeing that practically there is no link and by giving complete independence and freedom to every part of it. That is unique, for it does teach us many lessons, in the sense that we get on best together when we meet in complete freedom and in comradeship and we know that there is going to be no pressure or compulsion exercised upon us. And so this Commonwealth has grown and changed repeatedly and while member nations of this Commonwealth sometimes disagree, sometimes have interests conflicting with each other, sometimes pull in different directions, nevertheless, the basic fact remains that they meet as friends, try to understand each other, try to accommodate each other and try, as far as possible, to find a common way of working. It may not always happen, but what is really important is the friendly approach in this, as in every other problem of life or every problem of international affairs. That friendly approach, that sympathetic approach, that attempt to understand, that attempt, insofar as one can, to go in step and at the same time, enjoy the complete knowledge that one can take any step, a combination of these two factors has led, I suppose, to the success of this rather remarkable experiment.

Well, the countries of the Commonwealth are meeting soon in Conference in London. It is a normal annual Conference, but they meet together to consider various matters concerning them, various matters which interest them and which interest the world. But since this Conference has been called, other developments are taking place in the world. Other crises have arisen which, no doubt, will have to be considered there.

A heavy burden rests upon the Prime Minister of Australia, as on me, as well as on others at this juncture. We go to London. Why do we go there? For many reasons, to confer together earnestly to find ways of working together for the common good, but I take it primarily the purpose of our going to London is to find the way to peace. That is the urgent problem of every country and of the world. There is a lot of talk of peace and there are plenty of people who pay service, or if you like, lip-service to that idea, till the very word itself becomes somewhat debased, and one does not know what it means. Nevertheless, there is something called peace, which we all know, and there is such a thing as a peaceful approach to a problem. But talk of peace in the warlike way is not peace. Therefore, every individual in every country seeks that the approach to it must be a tolerant and accommodating one. I am quite sure you, Sir, are going as a messenger of peace in search of peace also. I shall in all humility also try to do that and I hope that whatever the outcome might be at this Conference, it will help in this vital problem of securing peace for our generation, and not only that, but for the succeeding generations.

You have come, Sir, from a country which might be called a new country. I belong to a country and to a people which have their roots in the immemorial past, going back to the origin of history, and yet in another way we are rather

new and very new. Generally we are a mixture of the old and new and sometimes these mixtures produce certain complications. We have to face that. It is a burden but it is an exciting burden, and in the attempt to face that burden there is not only excitement but a certain joy in having to face difficult problems. There is not very much in common outwardly between India and Australia, but, of course, there are tremendous problems we have in common, not only the fact of our being in the Commonwealth, that we meet together and discuss common problems, but really there is another fact which must necessarily bring us together closely. And that is a fact that Australia derives its inspiration from the past and the present from Europe in the West but finds today inevitably that geography and other things point towards Asia.

Economic reasons, political reasons, all these are ties that bring Australia towards Asia closer. It may be that when you are too close to each other, conflicts also arise. Anyhow, the closeness remains, whether it is one of conflict or otherwise. And so common problems arise. Australia is interested more and more in the problems of Asia and we ourselves who form part of Asia are inevitably also interested in those problems. Thus, we have many things in common between us and in the future it is of some importance both to India and to Australia that we should endeavour to work together, to understand each other, to tolerate each other and to cooperate with the other countries round about us for the common good of all.

I have ventured to say some of the thoughts that came to my mind, but really my purpose was to welcome you, Sir, and to tell you that, whether we agree or whether we differ in regard to various matters, we look with friendship towards Australia and we seek the friendship of Australia and therefore I ask Your Excellencies and ladies and gentlemen to drink to Australia.

## 5. A Peace Treaty with Japan<sup>1</sup>

... Mr Nehru thought there should be no further delay in concluding a peace treaty with Japan. There had already been a long delay and, the later a treaty was left, the more would Japanese resentment against the occupation grow. A time must come when the pressure of events would end the occupation, and it would be better to terminate the occupation gracefully before we were compelled

1. Minutes of the sixth meeting of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers, London, 9 January 1951. J.N. Collection. Extracts.



to do so. Nor would it be possible to restore Japan's sovereignty and at the same time impose substantial restrictions on it. As soon as the occupation was ended, the Japanese would start to agitate for the removal of such restrictions and these would have to disappear one by one. He therefore thought that no half-measures were possible. He appreciated the fears expressed by Mr Harrison<sup>2</sup> about a possible revival of militarism in Japan, but he did not think that this could be avoided by holding the Japanese people down.

Mr Nehru suggested that, if Japan were to be allowed to maintain defence forces, she could be prevented from augmenting these unduly if some control was imposed on her supplies of imported raw materials. Direct limitations of the armed forces could always be evaded, and the method of indirect restriction by the control of raw materials would therefore be better. Mr Nehru said that in his view Japan would be well advised not to alter the existing provision in her Constitution which forbade her to rearm. If she rearmed, she might invite attack by Russia or China, and such an attack might well lead to a world war. If, on the other hand, the Western Powers wished to use Japan as a base for use in a war against Communist Asia, their provision for this purpose must be fully adequate. This meant either that Japan must be fully armed and allied to the anti-Communist States, or that a strong military occupation must be maintained in Japan. Occupation implied military bases, and these implied that Japan would become a target in time of war. This would arouse even greater resentment among the Japanese people.

Mr Nehru therefore suggested that Japan should be encouraged to abide by her present Constitution, which forbade the maintenance of military forces. If the Japanese showed signs of creating unduly large armed forces, we should seek to limit these through the control of raw materials. He himself hoped that Japan would decide not to maintain armed forces: in that event she would be removed from the area of conflict, since no other Power could then regard her as a potential aggressor or wish to attack her....

... Mr Nehru said that the Government of India were prepared to waive their claims:<sup>3</sup> the loss which they would incur thereby would be outweighed by the advantages of gaining Japan's goodwill....

2. Eric John Harrison (1892-1974); Minister in Australia between 1934 and 1956. Menzies, the Australian Prime Minister, being indisposed, Harrison participated in the meeting.
3. It was pointed out that any treaty with Japan would have to regulate the question of claims against her for the destruction inflicted on many countries during the war.

## 6. To V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
January 23, 1951

My dear Krishna,

I have just received your telegram 9936 about the Japanese peace treaty. 'Strictly Personal' as usual. I wish you would realise that I am not an autocrat functioning in vacuum, but that I have to consult colleagues in the Cabinet, show them papers, etc. We inquired from our Missions in London, Moscow, Washington and Peking about their views and reactions. We have to place their replies before the Cabinet Committee. What am I to do with your reply? If I put it as it is, it will irritate and antagonise everybody. Apart from the unnecessary flings in it, it does not read as an objective analysis. There is too much excitement in it and fear that the wrong thing may be done. All this detracts from it. After paying me compliments, you treat me as if I was not very intelligent. And you will bring in the Civil Service, although this has little to do with the matter. All this makes my position very difficult. I have to carry my colleagues. If I am the only wise man in the country then our policy will be governed by the foolish.

It is so easy for you to send your messages so that they can be distributed—and send a brief separate personal message when necessary.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

1. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

## 7. To Ernest Bevin<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 12, 1951

My dear Secretary of State,

Many thanks for your letter of the 24th January,<sup>2</sup> which I received on my return to India. You will forgive me for the slight delay in answering this

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Bevin suggested Commonwealth contributions to the 1951-52 relief programme of the Palestine Refugee Fund of the U.N. and proposed India's share as \$ 1,705,000.



letter. I have been out of Delhi for part of the time since my return from England.

I am deeply sensible of the sufferings of the Arab refugees and of the need to resettle them. We have had a colossal refugee problem of our own to solve and I am fully aware of the misery that these human upheavals create and of the obligation of all, who are in a position to help, to try to alleviate this misery and ultimately to put an end to it. We have therefore considered your request with the fullest understanding and sympathy.

But, with all our sympathy, we came up against a very difficult position. The problem of refugees in our own country is taxing all our strength and we have been unable to help them in the manner we wanted to. There are large numbers still unprovided for in any way, although we have done our utmost within our capacity. Our financial situation is such that it leaves us no scope even for doing things that we want to do. Developments as well as welfare schemes of the greatest urgency and importance to us have had to be cut down owing to the need for economy. These include works under construction on whose early completion depends the solution of our food problem. We expect a food deficit of 5½ million tons. We have already arranged to import 3.7 million tons. In addition to this, we have requested the Government of the United States to supply us with two million tons on concessional terms.

You will appreciate, I hope, the difficulties we have to face and the reasons for our inability to respond to your wishes in this matter. It is only under the pressure of our domestic obligations that we have been compelled to come to this conclusion.

I was greatly distressed to read of your recent illness but am glad you are improving and wish you a rapid and complete recovery.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

LETTERS TO CHIEF MINISTERS





1

New Delhi  
November 1, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

The outstanding events in foreign affairs during the last fortnight, so far as India is concerned, have been the developments in Tibet.<sup>2</sup> There had been repeated rumours of Chinese troop movements on the Tibetan border since July last and this led us to draw the attention of our Ambassador in Peking and, through him, of the Chinese Government to the desirability of having peaceful negotiations for the settlement of the problem.<sup>3</sup> No precise information was available about these border movements and often they were denied or explained as movements on the other side of the border. There is an intermediate area between China and Tibet proper which China has considered as part of one of her western provinces and in which China had a right by a treaty<sup>4</sup> to keep garrisons. Many of these movements appeared to be in this middle area. Communications are difficult in Tibet and news travels slowly. So it was not easy to know what was happening.

2. On our part, we drew the attention of the Chinese Government repeatedly to this matter and pressed them to rely on peaceful methods. They replied that they were prepared for peaceful negotiations and the Tibetan delegates should go to them for this purpose. At the same time, statements were made about an army being prepared for the "liberation" of Tibet, and this was publicly announced as early as August last. We had hoped that, in view of our friendly advice as well as the international situation, military operations against Tibet would be avoided.

We advised the Tibetan delegates to go to Peking and, after some hesitation, they had agreed to do so.<sup>5</sup>

3. When news came to us that the Chinese Government had formally announced military operations against Tibet, we were surprised and distressed. Immediately we sent a note of protest<sup>6</sup> and requested the Chinese Government not to proceed with these operations and wait for the Tibetan delegates. Their

1. These letters have also been printed in G. Parthasarathi (ed.), *Jawaharlal Nehru: Letters to Chief Ministers 1947-64*, Vol. 2 (New Delhi, 1985), pp. 236-253.

2. See *ante*, Section 11.

3. K.M. Panikkar met the Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister on 13 August 1950 at Peking and communicated the Indian viewpoint.

4. The sparsely populated and mountainous area in Outer Tibet adjacent to the western provinces of China, especially Sikang, where both China and Tibet claimed to exercise sovereignty. The Convention of 1890 between Britain and China authorised China to post her troops in Outer Tibet.

5. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 434-436.

6. See *ante*, pp. 331-332.



answer was rather curt and laid stress on Tibet being an integral part of China and thus a domestic affair. No outside country, according to them, had a right to interfere in this domestic matter. They still expressed their willingness for peaceful negotiations, but said nothing about halting the advance of their troops. We have again addressed them on this subject and our correspondence will be published before you get this letter.<sup>7</sup>

4. I must say that this action of the Chinese Government has hurt us considerably and has appeared to us as an act of discourtesy to us in view of our prolonged correspondence on this subject. It has also seemed to us an essentially wrong act and one that might well add to the tensions existing in the world. To use coercion and armed force, when a way to peaceful settlement is open, is always wrong. To do so against a country like Tibet, which is obviously not in a position to offer much resistance and which could not injure China, seemed to us to add to the wrongness of this behaviour. From the international point of view, it was bound to react against China's own interests. Why then should she do it? It is not for me to guess, but it seems clear that owing to the development of the war situation in the Far East, and the accounts of repeated bombing of Manchurian towns,<sup>8</sup> the Chinese Government believed that they were threatened with war by their enemies. A temper arose there full of fear and apprehension and resentment against those real or fancied enemies and this led possibly to a change in policy or to a speeding up of what might have taken much longer to develop.

5. Whatever the reason may be and whatever their motives may be, the Chinese Government has, in our opinion, acted not only wrongly but foolishly and done injury to itself, to some extent to us, and, I think, to the cause of world peace. As you know, we have consistently tried to be friendly to the new China and have championed her interests in the United Nations and elsewhere. Thus, the new developments must necessarily affect our friendly relations. We do not intend to change our general policy because that is based on certain principles, as well as our judgment of the world situation. We do not even wish to do injury to China in any way, but we shall have to consider carefully every step that we may have to take in the future.

6. There has sometimes been reference in the press to the consequences on our own frontiers of China's occupation of Tibet.<sup>9</sup> From a military point of

7. The correspondence exchanged between China and India on Tibet was published on 3 November.

8. On 28 August, China complained to the Security Council of bombing of Manchurian towns by U.S. aircraft, demanded condemnation of the U.S.A. and sought prompt withdrawal of U.S. forces from Korea.

9. *The Statesman* of 29 October editorially cautioned that "even if the threat to the subcontinent should evaporate or, on examination, proves less immediate than some may dramatically suppose, it obviously now can be disregarded by neighbouring non-communist States only at their close peril."

view, this has no great consequence and involves no particular danger to India. Tibet is a very difficult country with an average altitude of 12,000 feet and then there is the great Himalayan barrier. It is an exceedingly difficult matter for any considerable body of men to cross into India over that barrier. But in any event we shall always keep proper watch on our extended frontiers to prevent any incidents happening.

7. The Korean war, after an easy advance of the U.N. troops and the South Koreans, has now slowed down somewhat, not far from the Manchurian border. While it may be said that the North Koreans as an army have been defeated completely, it is quite possible that guerilla operations or some organised resistance may still continue for some time. Meanwhile, the United Nations have passed some resolutions about the future of Korea.<sup>10</sup> With the objective of a united and free Korea we have agreed, but we have not associated ourselves fully with some of the resolutions passed by the U.N., because we did not agree with vital parts of them. It seemed to us that those resolutions were framed more with the idea of preparing for large-scale war than for peace. Where there is danger, preparation becomes necessary. But too much war talk and war preparation itself brings war nearer. One of those resolutions was described by me as something in the nature of an extension of the Atlantic Pact.<sup>11</sup> This description was greatly resented in the United States and perhaps elsewhere.<sup>12</sup> I do not think that the description was wrong although, of course, there are many differences between the two. It seemed to us that the United Nations, under stress of fear and strong emotion, was being led into a war mood and that was dangerous for the peace of the world. Gradually, there was a mounting hysteria in some countries and enormous war budgets were passed. Our small voice made little difference, though it was appreciated by large numbers of people all over the world, because few people want war and nearly all are passionately desirous for peace. Nevertheless, our declarations and the attitude we adopted in the United Nations led to bitter criticism of India and, more especially, of me, in the United States specially. For my part, and I have

10. The eight-Power resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 7 October, *inter alia*, envisaged the entry of U.N. forces into Korea. The seven-Power 'Uniting for Peace' resolution adopted by the First Committee on 19 October and by the General Assembly on 3 November contained several proposals unacceptable to India. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 395-397, 400-405 and 411.

11. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, p. 417.

12. *The Washington Post* of 18 October commented: "His mind is difficult for others and perhaps himself to fathom. There had been hope that Pandit Nehru would make a constructive contribution towards raising of the U.N. forces." *The Scotsman* (Edinburgh) of 17 October wrote: "The Indian Prime Minister may be a sincere opponent of aggression, but he is evidently reluctant to adopt the necessary means of countering it, as he admitted that India's capacity to take part in collective action was limited."



given the most earnest thought to this matter because it concerned issues of war and peace and the future of the world, I feel convinced that the general attitude we have taken up has been the right one and that it should be persisted in.

8. We have recently had a visit from the Foreign Minister of Burma. We took advantage of this visit to discuss many problems that are common to our countries.<sup>13</sup> In international affairs our outlooks are similar, and both countries desire that there should be cooperation between them. This applies, to a large extent, to Indonesia also.

9. The situation in Indo-China has greatly deteriorated from the point of view of the French and the Bao Dai Government they protect.<sup>14</sup> It seems clear that the present French forces there cannot succeed in their conflict with Ho Chi Minh's Government. They might even be progressively pushed back. This may result in military help being sent by the United States to Indo-China. If this help is given in sufficient quantity, it is possible that the military situation might change. But, as we have always claimed, the sword will not finally decide. Some other kind of an approach is necessary to win the masses of people who want to free themselves.

10. The question of a Japanese peace treaty is now becoming topical and much attention is being paid to it. During the past two or three years there has been a conflict in approach on this subject between the various Great Powers. It is hardly likely that they will all agree to a common approach. Therefore, it is now being considered whether it is possible and desirable to have such a peace treaty with Japan even though all may not agree.<sup>15</sup> A curious situation has arisen because Japan, which formerly was a great military nation, is now by its very Constitution<sup>16</sup> completely demilitarised and cannot keep armed forces. Can a free and independent Japan exist without an army, etc., or should it revert to militarism? Should its independence without an army be guaranteed by some other nation or by the United Nations? If any nation gives that guarantee, it will presumably like to keep its armed forces there and that would be a

13. The problems related to trade, immigration, air services, the position of Indian nationals in Burma, and the compensation payable in respect of lands owned by Indian nationals in Burma, following the nationalization of land by the Burmese Government.

14. French troops withdrew from several important military outposts after suffering serious reverses in September and October 1950.

15. The United States on 26 October 1950 circulated terms of a treaty for approval by "any or all nations at war with Japan willing to make peace." According to this draft, Japan would recognize the independence of Korea, agree to U.N. trusteeship with the U.S. as the administering authority over the Ryukyu and Bonin Islands and accept future decisions of the 'Big Four' Powers about the status of Formosa, the Pescadores, South Sakhalin and Kuriles Islands. If no decision were arrived at within a year of the enforcement of the treaty, the matter should be referred to the U.N. General Assembly.

16. Promulgated on 3 November 1946.

negation of Japanese independence. Can, then, the United Nations undertake this burden of guarantee, but without keeping any forces there? These are the problems that are uppermost in the mind of the Japanese people. There are many there who want to go back to their old armed might; there are also a good number who do not want an army and want to devote their resources to their betterment in other ways. I might mention here that the progress that Japan has made in economic recovery during the past three or four years is remarkable. In the same way defeated and destroyed Germany has recovered rapidly and has almost reached her pre-war figure of production.

11. In Nepal, there appears to be a great deal of ferment and for some weeks past all kinds of rumours have been spread about inner conflicts and popular dissatisfaction. Nepal is an independent country and we have no desire to interfere. At the same time, we are greatly interested in the progress of democratic institutions in that country. Apart from our preference for democracy, it is clear to us that the country will not be able to face its internal and external problems unless it makes substantial progress in this direction. Events in Tibet give additional importance to the position in Nepal.

12. In the United Nations much time has been spent over various resolutions called the seven-Power and eight-Power resolutions. There was a deadlock over the appointment of the Secretary-General.<sup>17</sup> This has now been resolved by the re-appointment of the old Secretary-General, Trygve Lie.

13. The Kashmir issue awaits hearing before the Security Council and publicity has been given to a resolution sponsored chiefly by the United Kingdom. We are entirely opposed to the whole concept of this resolution and we have instructed our representative to oppose it.<sup>18</sup>

14. Ever since the Dixon Report came out,<sup>19</sup> there has been a fierce and thoroughly indecent agitation in Pakistan<sup>20</sup> on the Kashmir issue. Every attempt has been made to whip up enthusiasm all over Pakistan and also, more especially, in the tribal areas. Pakistan newspapers are full of it and demands are made for *jehad* and a resumption of war, pledges are taken and scrolls signed. From the accounts that reach us this agitation has not got the solid basis which readers of newspapers might imagine. It was evidently organised at this particular moment because Kashmir was coming up before the Security Council. Pakistan hoped perhaps that by shouting and cursing a great deal it might make a difference. As a matter of fact the situation in the so-called 'Azad Kashmir'

17. In the Security Council, while the U.S.A. wanted Trygve Lie to be re-elected as Secretary-General, the U.S.S.R. wanted Zygmunt Modzelewski, the Polish Foreign Minister, to replace him. To break the deadlock, the question was referred to the General Assembly which voted on 1 November extending Lie's term by three years.

18. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 247-248.

19. The report was submitted before the Security Council on 15 September 1950.

20. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 245 and 327.



has been a progressively deteriorating one and there have been several instances of outbreaks of riots there suppressed by shooting. In the tribal areas, the movement for Pakhtoonistan is slowly growing. This has led to repeated bombing from the air by the Pakistan Air Force.<sup>21</sup> Because of all these internal weaknesses and difficulties, the Pakistan Government has tried to divert attention by trying to whip up a frenzy in regard to Kashmir. They have not succeeded or made much difference, in spite of the publicity in the press.

15. I spent the last weekend at Srinagar in Kashmir and had occasion to meet the General Council of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference. Just before my arrival, this Council had been meeting and had passed an important resolution.<sup>22</sup> In this resolution, apart from recounting past history, etc., they had come to the conclusion that a constituent assembly should be held as soon as possible to determine the Constitution of the State. I commended this resolution. I was happy to notice the vitality and strength of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference. Their General Council, which consisted of over 150 persons, had gathered there from the ends of the State, including Ladakh, but, of course, excluding areas held by Pakistan. Kashmir has recently had a terrible visitation in the shape of widespread and unprecedented floods in the Valley. Tremendous damage has been done and a new burden cast on the Government and people of Kashmir. It is a heavy burden and it is for us to share it, as we are trying to share the burdens caused by great calamities in other provinces. In spite of this blow, I found the leaders and prominent workers of the National Conference in good heart and facing these new as well as old trials with courage.

16. There has been a good deal of talk about a plebiscite in Kashmir and, as you know, we agreed to it long ago. For my part, I have little doubt that a really fair plebiscite would result in a majority for Shaikh Abdullah's Government and party and for accession to India. The difficulty has been in regard to conditions governing the plebiscite. If Pakistan had its way, it would convert Kashmir into a field for bitter, violent and most bigoted propaganda on the basis of religion, leading to riots and disorder on a large scale. That is not the kind of plebiscite we have envisaged, and that is why we have laid great stress on the conditions. The U.N. mediator, Dixon, made a proposal<sup>23</sup> which appeared to be astonishing. That proposal amounted to converting the Valley of Kashmir

21. On 24 October, the Afghan Government charged Pakistan with violation and bombing of Afghan territory by its army and air force and causing casualties among the civilian population.

22. The General Council in its resolution passed on 28 October described the Dixon Report as "a clear negation of the right of self-determination of the people of Jammu and Kashmir State," condemned the U.N.'s failure to solve the Kashmir dispute and called on the people of Kashmir to assert themselves by electing a constituent assembly at the earliest to decide on the future of the State.

23. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 235-243.

and other parts into a kind of half Pakistan even before the plebiscite. This would naturally have created a powerful psychological reaction and an impression that Pakistan had half come and would fully come a little later. In fact, it would have been the most unfair preparation for a plebiscite and we made it clear that we could not agree to it. The new proposal in the U.N. Security Council to have a committee of non-permanent members of the Council is a curious way of meeting with the situation. All kinds of commissions and inquiries have taken place and now it is proposed that some representatives of South American and other countries, sitting in New York, should take the matter in hand and decide. It is obvious that this can lead to nothing except, perhaps, to entangle us still further in false assumptions and wrong procedure. In our extreme desire to find a peaceful settlement, we have allowed ourselves repeatedly to get more and more tied up. We have accepted the U.N. resolutions with safeguards and reservations. Those safeguards and reservations have been forgotten or put aside and we are called upon from time to time to act up to the old resolutions, minus reservations. Because of all this, we have come to the conclusion that we cannot permit this drifting and sliding process to go on any longer. The Kashmir issue can only be solved by agreement between the parties concerned and all that an outsider can do is to help in bringing this about. Even that help in the past has not produced any great results. The alternative to such settlement is either war or a continuing stalemate.

17. We do not, for our part, wish to decide this or any other issue by war. I have declared publicly that we shall not go to war over Kashmir unless we are attacked by Pakistan.<sup>24</sup> I invited the Prime Minister of Pakistan to make a like declaration, but he has hesitated to do so and produced all kinds of irrelevant arguments. Apart from this question of Kashmir, we proposed a general no-war declaration to Pakistan.<sup>25</sup> That too has got stuck up in a lengthy correspondence in which each party's viewpoint is repeatedly emphasised. Our viewpoint is simple: Let both countries declare that they will not go to war against each other for the settlement of any dispute and will seek methods of negotiations, mediation, arbitration or reference to some international tribunal. It is clear that arbitration or reference to a tribunal would not apply to certain types of political disputes which are not justiciable. Thus they cannot apply to Kashmir.

18. We have made another and a very precise proposal to Pakistan about the settlement of two of our major problems, evacuee property and canal waters. I wrote to you about this in my last letter.<sup>26</sup> The Prime Minister of Pakistan's

24. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 415-424.

25. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 14 Part I, pp. 31-34, 65-67, 70-71, and Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 316-317, 322-326. See also *ante*, pp. 303-307.

26. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 551-557.



reply to our proposal did not take us far. I have again written to him<sup>27</sup> earnestly pressing him to agree to this proposal at least and thus take a firm step towards the solution of two of our major disputes. I await his reply.

19. As you know, there has been a permit system for visitors to Kashmir. It was proposed to put an end to it, but, on reconsideration, we have decided to continue it for some time. The idea behind discontinuing it was to encourage tourists to go without inconvenience. As a matter of fact, the tourist season has ended and not many people will go to Kashmir during these winter months. I might add that during the last summer, there was a considerable influx of tourists into the Valley and, but for the floods, this would have been even greater.

20. The trade position *vis-a-vis* Pakistan continues to be the same, that is to say, it is more or less at a standstill. It is difficult to resume it so long as there is no final settlement about the par value of the Pakistani rupee. We hope that some decision will be arrived at in the course of this month by the International Monetary Fund.

21. I pointed out to you in my last letter that there had been a remarkable increase in the return of Hindu migrants to East Bengal. This tendency has continued and more and more of these migrants are going back. The average daily figures of exodus between East and West Bengal are now as follows:-

	East to West Bengal	West to East Bengal
Hindus	5,630	8,022
Muslims	2,506	2,500

From the Hindu figures roughly 4,000 should be deducted on both sides as normal passengers as well as smugglers. Thus, we have a figure of Hindus coming out of East Bengal to West Bengal about 1,600 and Hindu migrants going back from West to East Bengal about 4,000. In the course of the last month a very considerable number of Hindu migrants have thus returned to East Bengal. It is said that many of them go there to sell their property or bring back their belongings. That certainly is true about some. But this kind of thing cannot be repeated week after week and month after month. If people go back to get their property, they swell up, when returning, the numbers of fresh migrants. In effect, we can take the two figures and note the difference.

22. From our other sources, we have been informed that the position in East Bengal, insofar as the minorities are concerned, has improved in some ways. Fewer incidents, such as dacoities, etc., are reported. The police in East

27. See *ante*, pp. 303-307

Bengal is also a little more active than it used to be and there is some change in the attitude both of officials and the public in East Bengal. It is possible also that the fact that the time-limit for return, as given in the Delhi Pact (the end of December), has also had some effect on more people returning either way.

23. While we have accurate figures for East and West Bengal, we have not got equally accurate figures for Assam. One feature of migrants' return, which is exercising the minds of the Assam Government, is the fact that some new people go from East Bengal to Assam with the intention of settling down there. This really is an old problem, quite apart from Partition or the Delhi Agreement. We have pointed this out to the Pakistan Government and further thought has to be given to it. We are definitely of opinion that we should not have a permit system in the East such as we have in the West. This would not be in consonance with the Delhi Agreement and would in fact come in the way of the large-scale movement of migrants going back.

24. I might mention here that there has been a relatively small but continuous flow of Muslims going to West Pakistan from various parts, usually *via* the Sind border. This is without permits and without any regulation.

25. In both East and West Pakistan, more especially in the former, there has been a large-scale agitation against the proposed basis of the Constitution of Pakistan.<sup>28</sup> Even the Muslim League in many places has joined this agitation and new parties have been formed, opposed to the orthodox parties. The whole political situation in Pakistan is thus rather fluid. The jute position in East Pakistan is growing more and more difficult as prices are falling.

26. Our Food Minister has the misfortune to face new problems, new difficulties and new crisis from week to week and almost day to day. Owing to failure of rains in September and October in some places, notably in parts of Bombay, Bihar and Madhya Bharat, crops have been ruined and wholly unforeseen demands are being made upon us. This month of November and early December are a peculiarly difficult time. We hope to get larger supplies in December from abroad. Meanwhile, we must tighten our belts and it is up to those provinces who have any additional stocks to give them, or rather to loan them, to the less fortunate States. It is natural for the better situated States to be averse to parting with what they have got. But the situation is a grave one and we can guarantee to them the return later of what they give

28. There was division and debate on the Basic Principles Committee report submitted to the Constituent Assembly on 7 September relating to proportionate representation of East Bengal in the Federal Legislature, on the distribution of powers between East and West Pakistan, and on the status of the Urdu and Bengali languages in the country. Five MLAs from East Bengal appealed on 3 October to the people to resist the imposition of the "unconstitutional constitution" which "ingeniously but solidly lays the foundation of dictatorship in Pakistan" and "bustles with anti-democratic measures."



now. Let there be no doubt about this. Early next year, we shall be in a position to do so. Meanwhile, I would earnestly request these provinces to keep about three or four months' supply with them and give the rest for use in the deficit areas. This will enable us to get over the present difficulty and bring relief to innumerable countrymen of ours in various parts of India.

27. After a very great deal of thought and discussion we have announced our policy in regard to sugar and *gur*.<sup>29</sup> Some States have not welcomed our decisions, but I can assure them that they were taken after the most careful consideration of all factors and in consultation with the Planning Commission. I hope that they will give full effect to this policy. You will have noticed the decision to increase the export duty on hessian from Rs 350 per ton to Rs 750.

28. Government are considering the desirability of introducing control on newsprint. There is a shortage of it which results in great hardship on a large number of newspapers. A few prosperous newspapers, which have large stocks with them, are not affected. It may be necessary to go back to some of the restrictions which prevailed previously in regard to price and size of newspapers.

29. The work of preparation for the general elections is now taking definite shape. There has recently been a conference of Election Officers from all over India in Delhi<sup>30</sup> and their problems were thrashed out by them. The work of delimitation of constituencies has been partly finished. Finality can only be given to many of these matters after Parliament has decided. But, meanwhile, electoral rolls are being published. It can now be said with some confidence that the elections will be held by May 1951. We must, therefore, keep this date in mind and work up to it.

30. I have found that in some States the names of some women are not entered in the electoral rolls and they are described as the wives of so and so. This is completely wrong and cannot be accepted. If proper names are not given, the person concerned will not have the right to vote.

31. I have been glad to notice that in some States stringent measures are being taken to combat blackmarketing and many persons have been arrested for this offence.<sup>31</sup> May I say, however, that I was surprised to read in the newspapers that some people so arrested were handcuffed and marched in this condition through the streets? This struck me as most improper, though it may

29. On 19 October, the Ministry of Agriculture announced that the Cabinet had decided not to make any change in the price of sugar and sugar-cane, but to provide incentives to the growers and producers of indigenous and refined varieties of sugar.

30. From 31 October to 2 November 1950.

31. For example, in a drive against hoarders and black-marketeers started on 4 October, it was reported by *The Statesman* that by 13 October about fifty persons had been arrested and prosecutions launched against 107 persons in Bihar and over a million yards of cloth and 21,000 pairs of *dhotis* and *saris* were seized in Bhagalpur. Reports of such seizures were also received from Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and Guwahati.

have pleased the public. It was improper because those arrested men were under-trials and not found guilty till then. It was improper also because this kind of thing should never be resorted to, except in the case of dangerous criminals who are apt to be violent. I am prepared to say that a person who indulges in anti-social activities is worse from the community's point of view than a normal criminal of another type. But he is not violent and is not likely to run away. He has other methods of trying to escape punishment. To handcuff him or to handcuff any person, except in case of grave necessity, is not in keeping with civilized traditions.

32. The textile strike in Bombay<sup>32</sup> at last came to an end, after a long period and after causing very great loss both to the strikers and to the country. I have expressed my opinion about this strike previously and how wrong and unjustified it was when matters were actually being considered by a tribunal. I should like to stress now the importance of preventing any victimization of the workers after the strike is over. It is impossible and undesirable to punish all the strikers. It is equally undesirable to pick out some and punish them. That will only be invidious treatment which will be resented by others. We cannot have peace in industry and labour unless our approach is always a friendly one and an attempt is made to win over people. There have been strikes of miners in collieries in Bihar and Orissa.<sup>33</sup> These strikes have also ended and I hope here also there will be no victimization.

33. The period of earthquakes in Assam<sup>34</sup> is not quite over yet and severe shocks sometimes come. But what is more important is the fact, that is now becoming more apparent, that the landscape in some parts of the State has completely changed. Many hills have slipped away and masses of trees and vegetation have been uprooted. There is thus likely to be a very great deal of erosion when the rains come, and floods on a big scale may well result. Thus, the next rainy season may bring further disaster to the State if something is not done previously.

34. As I put finishing touches to this letter on November 2nd, I learn that George Bernard Shaw died this morning.<sup>35</sup> We can hardly grieve about the passing away of a man at the age of 94, and yet this man has meant so much to our generation and to large numbers of us as individuals that his death comes as a sorrow, and produces an emptiness. One of the really great men of our time has passed away.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

32. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part 1, pp. 55-58.

33. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part 1, pp. 58-60.

34. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 15 Part 1, pp. 163-166.

35. For Nehru's tribute to Shaw, see *post*, p. 653.



II

New Delhi  
November 17, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

The last fortnight has seen one new development, which affects India more than any other country. There has been a dramatic suddenness about events in Nepal.<sup>1</sup> The King's flight to our Embassy at Kathmandu, the refusal of the Prime Minister's Government to allow him to come to India, the crowning of a three-year old babe as King, the uprisings in certain border areas of Nepal and the capture by the insurgents of the important town of Birgunj, the removal of the treasure there and later its transport to Delhi, where it was seized by the Police. All this has a certain comic opera tinge about it, in spite of its great seriousness.

2. Events in Nepal immediately made people, both in India and abroad, think of our Himalayan frontier and the possible dangers to our security. Happenings in Tibet had already rather shaken many people's confidence and to this was now added Nepal. For the moment, the United Nations with its Kashmir and South African and other issues receded somewhat in the background and Tibet and Nepal came to the front. The new situation created by these events changed, to some extent, the centre of gravity of our thinking, and many amateur strategists talked and wrote about the new dangers to India.

3. It is perfectly true that recent happenings have made a great difference to the balance of power in the world. The most important factor was the emergence of a strong and centralised China. Whether this was going to be a factor in favour of peace or war opinions differed. But the fact of its emergence was patent enough and no one could doubt that the old balance had thus been completely upset. To be pushed into prominence in world affairs during these days of crisis, is not an unmixed blessing. If China came out as a Great Power, and a Power allied to the Soviets, all previous calculations had to be reconsidered. To us in India and to many other countries in Asia, this had a particular significance. This significance was partly due to the fact that a great country, under the leadership of communists, was playing an important role in Asia. The forces allied to communism thus gained a great adhesion in strength. But the frequent reference to communism in this as in other contexts is apt to make us overlook other long-term factors. One of these, of particular importance to India, was the approach of the Chinese power to the Indian frontier. In Asia, apart from the Soviet territories, India and China are the biggest and potentially the strongest countries. Both of them have played a great role in the past and have influenced their neighbour countries. The influence of each

1. See *ante*, Section 12.

overlapped the other's in large areas, but there was no basic conflict between them. Each of these vast countries was a world in itself and though they had a great deal of trouble often enough, this was mostly confined to their borders, except when some invader came across them. Even so, both had a tremendous capacity to absorb those invaders and make them lose themselves in the sea of Indian or Chinese humanity. The power of assimilation of both these countries was tremendous. They did not come into conflict with each other, nor was there ever a real test of how they would affect each other culturally and in other ways, if their interests clashed. In South-East Asia, both functioned and both left permanent marks of their influence. Yet there is no record of conflict between those cultural and other influences. There was a process of adjustment, in varying degrees, in each country of South-East Asia.

4. It is a fact to be noted and remembered that during this long period of history, India and China were never really at war, although there were some petty conflicts. Partly of course this was due to their distance, for even though their borders touched each other, they yet remained far, and there was the great Himalayan barrier. But there was something more to it than that. Both, as a whole, were peaceful nations, proud of their heritage and content with it, looking upon others with a certain condescension as at younger and less-developed people. The message of the Buddha, common to both, was also a link, which brought a measure of understanding to each of the other, even though they differed very greatly.

5. The developments in Tibet rather suddenly made people realise that China might have a long common frontier with India, and this new China was probably very different from the old. Also the Himalayan barrier was not quite so effective as it used to be. What would happen when China, with its new-born strength and dynamism and a certain aggressiveness, came right up to the borders of India? Would there be peace between the two or tension and conflict? Even apart from communism, this new question faced us in the future. The addition of communism added to its gravity, because many people feared infiltration of communist ideas even more than the attack of armed men.

6. In this new development that had taken place in Asia, it became important for all the countries of South and South-East Asia to think of their relations with China. A new adjustment had to be made. The previous China, under Marshal Chiang Kai-shek's Government, was important in many ways. But it did not raise these new problems. Gradually it had become almost an adjunct of European and American politics. It made no great difference to Asia. The new China did make a basic difference to all of us and it did so quite apart from the fact that it was closely allied, in ideology as well as in its politics, to the Soviet countries. The question arose as to whether this new and communist China would function as some kind of a satellite, however big, to the Soviet, or as an independent entity having a will and objective of its own.



7. You will remember that I have often written to you about this new China and sent you reports of our Ambassador in Peking. This was before any war broke out in Korea. My mind was full of these great changes that had taken place and I groped about to understand their significance and the direction in which they were tending. I wanted to share my thoughts with you and to give you such data as I possessed. Whatever our relations with China may be in the present or the future, it is of high importance that we should understand her. We see something there, which is the result of nearly forty years of incessant struggle and war. These wars ruined China to a very large extent. But they also moulded it anew, and something came out of them, which is tough and hard. Has this something lost its basic Chinese character or does that national individuality, for which China and the Chinese have been famous through the ages, still endure? In any event, what was this new amalgam like? The fate of Asia and even of the world was going to be powerfully affected by it. It was not enough to like it or dislike it. It was a fact to be realised and understood. Because of this patent fact, we felt that recognition of this new Government was the right course. But something much more than recognition was necessary; we had to understand it. There can be little doubt that the leaders of this new China are men of ability, steeled by constant struggle. When a great nation has its destinies controlled by such people, who have definite objectives before them, it cannot be ignored.

8. It seemed to us that in this new shape of things, it was important for India and China to have friendly relations, if that was possible. Anything else would, in the long run, have been bad not only for our two countries but for Asia as a whole. Whether it was possible for the two countries to have friendly relations in the present context of things, was not clear. But the attempt had to be made in the interests not only of the present but of the future. That should not have involved any interference with each other. It could only have been undertaken in a spirit of broad tolerance and understanding and in the belief that the larger interests of our respective countries as well as of humanity demanded it. If that friendship came, there would be a very powerful force for peace in the world. If there was conflict or fear of conflict, then this vast area would become a prey to constant fear and apprehension and our efforts at progress would be impeded.

9. We tried to follow this larger policy and refused to be swept away by the fears and passions of the moment. We wanted to be at peace and to have friendly relations with the other countries of the world, but in the perspective of history, the relations of India and China were even more important. We did not know what China's reaction would be to these efforts of ours and her behaviour in the immediate past had not been encouraging. Nevertheless we endeavoured to pursue that policy. We considered it fundamentally right and without compromising ourselves in regard to any basic principle. We found gradually that there was some change in the Chinese attitude towards India.

The previous hostility, at any rate, lessened or disappeared and at least the tone of friendliness came in. There appeared to be a realisation in China, as there was in India, that it was to the interest of both to avoid friction. There was also some kind of an Asian feeling about it. There were, of course, different pulls in each country.

10. The Korean war brought new complications and both these countries had to give answers, from day to day, to difficult questions. We considered it in the larger context of aggression and world peace; China was more intimately affected because the struggle was across her borders and it seemed to her as a kind of possible prelude to some attack on her own independence. Her sympathies were entirely with the North Koreans, because both had come out of the same school. Nevertheless it was hoped that the conflict would not spread and, on the whole, China remained calm. The collapse of the North Korean armies rather suddenly altered the situation, and immediately the question arose of the crossing of the 38th parallel. This invisible and artificial line became a symbol and China reacted violently to the possibility of the line being crossed. There can be no doubt now that what she said at the time, she meant, and that she felt that her own security was threatened. We received her messages, clear and explicit, and we passed them on to the other Great Powers. We saw that apart from the rights and wrongs of the question, world war hung in the balance and no risks could be taken with it. Risks however were taken and it was said that all this had been bluff. India had plenty of critics in the Western world and we were considered very simple and naive in the art of politics to be taken in so easily by a few threats. Now the world sees that it was something more than bluff or a threat and a new and much more difficult situation has arisen.

11. While all this was happening in North Korea, Tibet came into prominence. China's forces entered it and we learnt of this with surprise and some resentment. It seemed to us not quite fair on the part of the Chinese Government to take this step after all that we had said to them and they had said to us on this subject. It also seemed to us as totally unjustified, for Tibet could be no danger to China and Tibet was willing to have peaceful negotiations. There was also the imminent danger of this little spark helping the fire to spread. We wondered what China's real attitude towards India was. Did she care so little for the friendship of India as deliberately to flout our wishes? Was she really in such a mood for aggressive tactics as not to care for any consequences? It is difficult to peep into the mind of a people during moments of crisis, when they fear their own security threatened. But, looking at it from any point of view, this invasion of Tibet was wrong and foolish. India naturally resented it and our new-born attempts at friendship suffered a blow. That feeling of resentment still remains and a certain apprehension is added to it. I do not think that there is any near danger to our frontiers and in any event we are not so weak as to be frightened. Nevertheless, we have to become more frontier-conscious and to take all reasonable steps to guard the mountain passes, which



lead to our country. But there is no reason for people to get hysterical or even excited about this matter.

12. About Tibet, we still hope that she may retain her autonomy and we shall work for it through diplomatic means; there are no more effective means available. About our frontier, the McMahon line,<sup>2</sup> we are adamant and we are not going to tolerate any breach of it. Other questions, such as our Mission at Lhasa and our trade posts elsewhere, will depend on circumstances. We are not going to war over them.

13. Looking again at the historical perspective, it is to the interests of Western Powers to prevent China and India getting too friendly. Oddly enough I think that such friendliness is not to the liking of the Soviet Union also. Therefore, a certain encouragement is given by these Powers to anything which may spoil our relations. We have to face a difficult and delicate situation, both in Tibet and in Korea. We do so, as we have repeatedly proclaimed, by pursuing a somewhat detached policy and judging each issue on the merits. We shall continue to do so, though undoubtedly the developments in Tibet have been a blow to our policy.

14. Coming to Nepal, it is difficult to prophesy what will happen. It seems likely that the Nepal army will be able to drive out the insurgents from many of the places they have occupied. But that will not necessarily mean the end of the struggle. This means a period of instability and disorder in parts of Nepal. We disapprove of this thoroughly and we would like to have peace there. But it is clear that there is going to be no effective peace, if the old Rana regime continues unchanged. Things have gone too far for a reversion to the old. The position is rather extraordinary. We recognise the old King, who is in Delhi at present, and at the same time we continue to recognise the Rana's Government in Kathmandu. I think that some of the activities of the insurgents have been extraordinarily foolish and likely to injure them. But the fact remains that our sympathies go out to those people and forces which work for a progressive and liberal government in Nepal. We are functioning with strict neutrality, after two or three days of confusion on the Nepal border, when it was difficult to know what was happening and proper orders could not be issued. We have now made our position fairly clear and stated that we will not tolerate armed forces or bands entering India from Nepal or Nepal from India. Realising that a continuation of this conflict will be injurious both to Nepal and to India, we have suggested a ceasefire to the Nepalese Government and peaceful discussions. We have had no answer yet. But the language some members of the Nepalese Government have used is far from encouraging. Indeed

2. The watershed boundary of about 850 miles between India and Tibet east of Bhutan was formalized at Shimla in 1914 between India, Tibet and China. It was known as the McMahon Line after the representative of the Government of India, Sir Henry McMahon (1862-1949).

there has been a tendency on the part of the Nepal Government to be somewhat discourteous to us, and of course, not to follow our advice. I do not know, therefore, whether they will accept our suggestion or not. I feel sure that if they do not, they will suffer for it. They rely perhaps on some kind of diplomatic assistance from some of the Great Powers. I rather doubt if they will get much out of them, and even if they did, it will not be easy to profit by it. Nepal is and must remain to be a country with which India is most intimately concerned and the general policy as to how to meet the present situation will have to be laid down by us. Unfortunately, it appears that some other advisers of the Nepal Government and some of the Western countries do not look upon this in the same way as we do, though they recognise that India has the first claim to lay down a positive policy in regard to Nepal. We shall not commit ourselves yet, but events may force our hands at any time and then we shall have to declare clearly what we stand for. We are still recognising the old King and we are likely to continue doing so. We sympathise with attempts at radical reforms in Nepal and we certainly will continue to do so.

15. The United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council go on debating and passing resolutions. Kashmir has been on the verge of a debate in the Security Council. This had to be postponed for various reasons. I am becoming more and more convinced that this matter will not be settled in the Security Council or by any foreign organisation. If it is to be settled, it will have to be settled directly between the parties concerned. I have repeatedly explained our position to you and all I wish to say is that we adhere to that position.

16. As I write this letter, the South African Indian issue is being debated before the Political Committee of the General Assembly. Here also there is not much room left for us to give up anything that we have stood for. Other countries are chiefly interested in South Africa, not because of right or justice or equity or United Nations' Charter of Human Rights, but because any conflict of this kind at this moment is deprecated. South Africa, therefore, gets the support of many countries for this negative reason.

17. Parliament began a new session on the 14th November and the President pointed out, in his address, the gravity of the international situation. It is indeed very grave. And yet there are some hopeful signs. Brought to the edge of a precipice, all the Great Powers have suddenly realised where they were and are trying at last to find some way back.

18. As I write this, the debate on the food situation is continuing in Parliament and severe criticism has been made of Government's policy.<sup>3</sup> I shall not discuss

3. In the debate on 16 November, the Government was criticized for not completing irrigation and flood control schemes, reducing financial deficit and having a clear programme of food production.



this here. But I should like to point out to you what the President has said. He has stated that inevitably we shall have to undergo privations, if we are to meet this grave situation. I regret to say that I do not see the spirit of self-discipline and of enduring privations anywhere in India, individuals apart. This is a more serious affair than the actual shortage of food. We take things too easily and complain loudly if we miss some little comfort or something that we are used to. That is not only unbecoming but a dangerous frame of mind. We have to pull ourselves up and make the country realise what we are up against. We pass laws and rules about punishing the black marketeer; we fix prices, etc; and yet not much is done. Reports come that foodgrains are sold frequently at a much higher price than fixed. Why shouldn't we take action immediately against this? We talk of shortage of sugar and yet during this Diwali season there were mountains of sweets everywhere. In spite of this, people complain. I do not think it is proper or even decent to have this display of luxury foods when common people lack necessities.

19. The Central Government will of course do its utmost to help the States that are in need of food. And yet it seems to me that far too much reliance is placed on the Centre and relatively little effort is made in the States. There is even now not that sense of urgency which sweeps everything before it. It is so easy to go on writing to the Centre to supply the needs of each State. It is not so easy for the Centre to go on buying abroad at heavy cost, a cost which comes in the way of all our development schemes. It must be remembered that it is the primary duty of each State to face this food problem and not merely to rely on the Centre. It must be remembered also that in the present crisis we have all to pull together and help each other.

20. The President has also stated that the general elections have now been finally fixed for November-December 1951. You know how hard I have tried to have earlier elections. But I had to succumb to the facts of the situation. This does not mean that we should relax our efforts in regard to the preparation for elections. We should still continue, as if elections had to be held early, so that we might be completely ready long before the allotted time.

21. I have been giving you, during my recent letters, figures of the movements of population between West Bengal and East Pakistan. I shall not give you any more figures. That movement of migrants back to their old homes continues powerfully. Indeed it may be said that a certain normality is coming into the picture, insofar as these movements are concerned.

22. You were good enough to send me your good wishes on the occasion of my birthday. I am deeply grateful for your affection and goodwill.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## III

New Delhi  
December 3, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

I am sorry for the slight delay in my fortnightly letter. You will appreciate that developments in the international field during the last few days have cast a heavy burden on us. More particularly; the news that has come during the last two or three days from the Far East has brought a sudden realisation of impending catastrophe.

2. It is this feeling of overwhelming danger that fills the minds of all thinking people in the world today. What was a distant and disagreeable prospect has become, with dramatic suddenness, almost a reality. The Prime Minister of England is hurrying to the United States to meet President Truman. Every Foreign Office is tense with expectation of good or bad news. While Governments all over the world are naturally deeply concerned with this turn of events, this is not merely a governmental matter. It affects multitudes of peoples who may have to face war and all the terrible consequences of war. And so there has been a fear and a revulsion of feeling against such a war. The mention by President Truman of the possibility of an atomic bomb being used produced powerful and most unfavourable reactions in the public mind in Asia and Europe. It was probably this mention that created a feeling of consternation in the United Kingdom which was reflected in Parliament there.<sup>1</sup> As a result of this, Mr Attlee got into touch with President Truman immediately and proposed a meeting. That meeting will probably take place tomorrow or the day after.

3. It is easy for any of us, sitting in the comfort of our studies and offices, to criticise and blame this party or the other. Probably our criticism and apportionment of blame will fit in with our natural grooves of thought. But those of us who have a certain responsibility—and which of us has not got a measure of responsibility?—must be clear in our minds as to what we seek. If it is peace that we seek and the avoidance of war, then our minds and actions should be attuned to that end. It is clear that a competition in criticism and invective and calling each other aggressor, will not lead us towards peace. It will only add to the tension and bitterness and thus make it more difficult for a peaceful consideration of any problem.

4. Therefore it becomes important that we should for the moment stop this contest of words and accusations and think on different lines. This approach

1. Attlee, referring to Truman's statement about the possible use of an atomic bomb in Korea, said in the House of Commons on 30 November that "H.M. Government consider that a decision of such grave import could not be taken on behalf of the U.N. without the fullest prior consultation with those member States who are participating in international police action in Korea."



should lead the leaders of the principal Powers to meet together and discuss how to stop this drift to war and how to arrive at least at some temporary understanding which, later, might lead to a more permanent settlement. The present crisis is due to developments in Korea. The United Nations, and more particularly the U.S.A., are deeply committed to a certain course of action. China is obviously intensely interested. If there is to be peace between China and the U.N. over the Korean issue, then China must be an equal party to any talks that might take place. Apart from Korea, the question of Formosa is also of vital importance.

5. India cannot make much difference from the military or economic point of view and in the world today it is these matters that count. Nevertheless, India can make some slight difference, because we have tried to follow a policy of non-alignment with any particular group and of thinking in terms of world peace more than anything else. Our voice, though not loud, is listened to with some attention. It is not surprising that in this moment of crisis many countries, who might normally ignore us, are thinking more and more as to what India can do to help.<sup>2</sup> Suggestions have been made that we should make public appeals to this or that end. There is no difficulty in making such appeal for peace, but that appeal would have no value if it is rejected out of hand by the parties most concerned. So we have to proceed more cautiously, taking advantage of every opportunity and yet not putting ourselves or any other country in an embarrassing position. We have, therefore, instructed our representatives and Ambassadors abroad to work for some settlement by negotiation between the Powers concerned, including of course China. We have pointed out to other Governments that this is no time for passing brave resolutions in the United Nations involving condemnation of some nation or other. The only way out is to decide to meet and to discuss the problem from the point of view first of stopping the war, that is, a ceasefire, secondly of having a zone in Korea from which troops should withdraw on both sides, thirdly of discussing the Korean problem as it is today and the shape it should take in the future, and then the problem of Formosa.

6. While there may be general agreement on this approach, all kinds of considerations of prestige and of giving up a position that had been taken up thus far arise and prevent that approach by negotiation. It seems clear that every country in Europe and most countries in Asia are anxious and eager for a negotiated settlement. The two countries, and both of these are most intimately concerned, which may have gone too far to make a vital change in their policies,

2. Reuter reported on 3 December that Attlee was believed to have discussed with the French Government the possibilities offered by India's position and that he was expected to ask Truman to join in trying to take all possible advantage of India's contacts with China.

are China and the U.S.A. The U.S.A. is committed to certain policies and certain action in Korea. It is difficult for this great Power to run counter to the policy it has so far pursued. Probably even American public opinion would come in the way of any such marked change. China, after many attempts to enter the United Nations and after trying to avoid an extension of the Korean war, appears to have been overcome by the idea of her freedom being in peril. That brought about a sudden change in her policy and they began to think of and prepare for war. Having come to this conclusion, all the energies of the Chinese nation have been diverted to this end. Both in the U.S.A. and China there is deep suspicion of the other's motives and this probably is a greater barrier to a negotiated settlement than any other.

7. It is interesting to note that, from such information as is available to us, Soviet Russia has not played an aggressive role in these latter developments. They have undoubtedly supported China, who is their ally. But it does seem that they are not anxious to have a world war and have therefore exercised a moderating influence on China. If this is so, it leads to the conclusion that while Russia would not mind at all and might even welcome a further extension of the conflict in the Far East involving an ever larger number of American or U.N. forces, she is not desirous of having a world war. This is a helpful factor in the situation.

8. During the last ten days or so, some efforts were made to consider the problem of Korea in consultation with the Chinese. A strong Chinese Delegation went to Lake Success and it was hoped that direct contacts between them and representatives of other countries at Lake Success might lead to a clearer understanding of each other's points of view and possibly to a settlement. Just then, General MacArthur's offensive towards the Manchurian border started. About the same time or a little later, resolutions were brought forward before the Security Council condemning China as an aggressor nation and also separately condemning the U.S.A. for its aggression in Korea.<sup>3</sup> This approach on both sides was not conducive to peace. According to the Chinese, a trick had been played upon them by talking of peace and at the same time attacking them. They say that they can hardly believe the word of any country when it is so far removed from the actual deed.

9. In any event, the position now is that a meeting of the representatives of the Great Powers plus China is an essential first step. We have suggested

3. On 24 November, the Soviet representative charged the United States of aggression against China, and on 30 November the U.S.S.R. sponsored a resolution calling for the withdrawal of American forces from Formosa and "all other territories belonging to China." It was defeated by nine votes to one, with India abstaining.



this as well as a ceasefire and, immediately after, a demilitarized zone. We have also pointed out that the use of the atomic bomb must be avoided. Any country that uses this bomb for the first time will have a heavy burden to carry and will not have the sympathy of the rest of the world, more especially Asia. We have stressed therefore that the atomic bomb must not be used.

10. There has been some reference in the papers to the possibility of my being invited to Washington for this or subsequent talks. This is completely without foundation and there is no particular point in my going there now. If my going were necessary, I would certainly decide to go. But I see no chance at all of this happening in the near future.

11. You must have read in the newspapers that Mr Attlee has invited a conference of the Prime Ministers of the Commonwealth in London on the 4th. I have accepted this invitation though it was difficult for me to leave India. Whether I go to London or not, however, depends upon developments in the course of the next three weeks or so. If I go, I am supposed to stay there for ten or twelve days.

12. In Tibet there has been no marked development during the last fortnight. So far as we know, the Chinese forces have not advanced. Conditions in Lhasa are more or less normal. This lull has no great significance and there is really no important obstruction in the way of the Chinese forces. If they decide to advance on Lhasa, they can certainly do so. Our position in regard to Tibet continues to be one of regret that military measures were taken by the Chinese Government when peaceful methods were available. Tibet has appealed to the U.N. but no step has followed this appeal and we do not even know whether the appeal will come up for consideration before the U.N. In view of the position in Tibet, as well as the international situation, it seems to us that little purpose will be served by condemnation of China either in the U.N. or elsewhere. We have suggested, therefore, that a recommendation be made by the U.N., if it considers the question, to the two parties, that is, China and Tibet, to settle the problem by negotiation and amicably. There is less point now than ever in mere condemnations which cannot be acted upon.

13. Ever since this development in Tibet, there has been much talk in India about threats to our frontier. I think that there is no foreseeable possibility of any real military threat to our frontier *via* Tibet, for a variety of reasons which I need not discuss here. But there is always a possibility of trouble-makers coming through or infiltrating into India. We are taking adequate measures to prevent this and otherwise to guard our frontier where we might be threatened in any way. It should be remembered that the frontier of India with Tibet and China is tremendously long. It is a mountainous area with some of the highest mountains in the world, and even the passes are difficult to negotiate. During the coming winter, the greater part of it can hardly be crossed except by expert mountaineers. There are some passes, however, which can be used, but

even they are none too easy. During the spring and summer conditions for travel across the border are easier, but still difficult.

14. Normally, it should be the policy of India and China to have friendly relations without any threat to each other across their common border. In the long run that is the only policy to adopt by two countries having this common frontier. Any other policy means a tremendous burden on mere defence of frontiers, apart from other consequences. While this should be our normal policy, and this was one reason why we have pursued it, conditions in the world are far too dangerous and explosive for us to think always in terms of normality. We have, therefore, to pursue the normal policy within certain limitations and with all necessary precautions.

15. In Nepal the position has been almost static for some time. The insurgents had to give up the town of Birganj which they had captured and have now changed their tactics and are following, to a large extent, guerilla methods. It is possible for them or for any organised body of men to carry on these tactics for a long time without being suppressed. If they have popular sympathy, then of course the task becomes easier still. Thus, if this continues, the probability is that while the vital and strategic points will be held by the Nepal Government of today, large areas, away from the main lines of communications, may be cut off from the Nepal Government and generally controlled by insurgents. That means a state of continuing disorder in considerable parts of Nepal. India cannot welcome this state of affairs, more especially when the world is in a state of high crisis and our own frontiers are none too safe.

16. It is our desire, therefore, to have peace in Nepal. But we realise that peace cannot come by an attempt to revert to the old order. Things have gone too far for that, and some essential changes are necessary even from the point of view of peace and orderly development. Of course, we have always been anxious to have this orderly development towards popular and democratic Government in Nepal.

17. You will have noticed that two important Ministers of the Nepal Government have been conferring with us in Delhi. The King, of course, is here also as our guest. He does not confer with the Nepalese Ministers. In the nature of things we have to deal with both of these separately. Our talks with the Nepalese Ministers have not yielded any substantial result yet. We have proceeded with deliberation and without any attempt to rush things, even though the situation demands quick remedies. Probably, in the course of the next few days, these consultations will end. For our part we had and have no intention to interfere in the internal affairs of Nepal. But, intention or no intention, they affect us intimately and therefore we cannot ignore them. For the good of Nepal, as well as of our own and the world, we are convinced that the old autocratic regime is not good enough even to give peace and stability and much less for any progress. We have pointed this out to the Nepalese Ministers



and told them that it is not for us to suggest changes; it is for representatives of Nepal or, at any rate, of the main groups of Nepal to confer and devise ways and methods. If our advice is sought, we shall certainly give it.

18. The problem, as it is at present, is how to devise some interim form of government till such time as popular consultation on the basis of some kind of a constituent assembly can take place. Even this interim government cannot be of the old type. It has to have popular representation and the old autocratic powers have to be limited. For our part, we do not want complete upset as this would necessarily lead to a period of difficulty and disorder. Therefore, the interim arrangement should, if possible, mean an association of the progressive groups with the Rana group. All depends on how this is done and on the progressive groups playing an effective part.

19. There is the question of the King. There has been a lot of talk about our recognising this or that person. The position, however, is that the old King was recognised by us in the normal course and so long as we do not take any other step that recognition must necessarily continue. We see no reason to take any other step.

20. In the United Nations a resolution on Indians in South Africa was passed. This is fairly satisfactory, although it does not lead us anywhere. In fact, all these questions, however important they might be, have become relatively secondary to the main issues before the world.

21. You must have seen the correspondence with Pakistan on the no-war declaration, etc., which we published a few days ago. It is unfortunate that in spite of every effort we arrived at a dead end; and yet it was not completely a dead end and some time or other we shall have to find a way out. It is not possible to live on with a neighbour country in this state of permanent crisis.

22. International problems have pushed into the background our own present difficulties. The greatest of these is, of course, food and we are passing through a very difficult period. Several States are not only living from hand to mouth, but sometimes the hand does not reach the mouth. I hope that soon this immediate difficulty will be lessened. Our Food Ministry is completely alive to this problem and is doing its best. I can only appeal to all the States to appreciate what we are doing and to cooperate fully in that task. In regard to sugar and *gur* certain changes have been made in our previous declarations.<sup>4</sup> I hope these will meet with your approval and will improve the situation.

23. There is one matter to which I should like to draw your special attention. I have received a number of representations from certain backward communities

4. On 1 December, a new policy regarding sugar and *gur* was announced. While control was to continue over the sale of one million tons in the current year, some sugar was to be allowed for sale in the open market and manufacture of *gur* without licence was to be allowed. A revised price structure was expected to act as an incentive to producers and the industry for raising production.

regarding the order made by the President under Clause I of Article 341 of the Constitution declaring certain castes and tribes as Scheduled Castes and Tribes for the purpose of the Constitution.<sup>5</sup> This refers chiefly to those castes and tribes having electoral privileges. It does not mean that other Backward Classes, whatever religion they may profess, should not be given all necessary State aid and facilities, apart from elections. No distinction should be made in regard to this State aid and facilities between Hindu Scheduled Castes and Christian or other Backward Classes. To withdraw these facilities from Christians belonging to backward communities would be to go against the spirit of the Constitution. It should be remembered that the President's Order relates only to the question of reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and has no bearing on the matter of State aid and facilities to Backward Classes. In Article 340 of the Constitution the words "Backward Classes" have been advisedly used in order to remove any misunderstanding regarding the meaning of Articles 340 and 341 of the Constitution.

24. During the last fortnight I paid a visit to Jamshedpur to open another of our national laboratories for research.<sup>6</sup> It is always a pleasure to me to undertake such a task because I attach great value to scientific research. All our progress in this country will ultimately depend upon the scientific talent that we have. During these months and years of difficulty, and sometimes of depression, this fact of scientific advance in India has been a great comfort to me. In Jamshedpur I visited naturally the great Iron & Steel Works and was pleased to find how they had expanded and progressed since I went there last.

25. There has been a great deal of anxiety in all parts of India at the reported serious illness of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. It is now two and a half years or more since Badshah Khan was put in prison and for us, his old colleagues and friends, it is a matter of deep and continuing distress that the bravest of our comrades should languish in prison. It is difficult to know exactly how he is, but from such accounts as we have received, there is little doubt that he is ill. I hope that wisdom will come to the Pakistan Government to release Badshah Khan before it is too late. I might remind you that another of our old colleagues, who was the leader of Baluchistan, Khan Abdus Samad Khan, has also long been in Pakistan prison.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

5. The Presidential Order of August 1950 reduced the number of members belonging to Scheduled Tribes from 248 lakhs, as determined by the 1941 Census, to 179 lakhs, while the number of the Scheduled Caste members remained practically the same as 428 lakhs.

6. For Nehru's address at the National Metallurgical Laboratory, see *ante*, pp. 73-76.



IV

New Delhi  
December 18, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

Three days ago, when I should have normally written to you this letter, a heavy blow fell upon all of us and upon India. We shall take a long time to recover from it and, even so, there will always be a sense of emptiness for those who had the privilege of knowing and working with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. The great ones pass, the warriors who led us in our struggle depart, and we all feel somewhat lonely and desolate. On those who remain, the burden and the responsibility grow heavier.

2. Sardar Patel was a strange mixture of single-mindedness in the pursuit of his objectives and many-sided activities. On all these activities, he has left his powerful impress, and both the Central Government and every State Government have felt, during these three or four years, the mark of a strong and guiding hand. So, in your work, you will miss him as we will miss him from day to day in our work at the Centre. You will have to do without him, for there is no one to take his place.

3. Sorrow and calamity may bear down upon us or encompass us. But we have to carry on, to the best of our ability, the work with which we are charged. Indeed, every calamity is a challenge to our manhood and our nationhood, and an individual or a nation is judged ultimately by the way this challenge is accepted. The entire world today is a huge question mark and a challenge. To this we have to add our own problems and difficulties. Perhaps it is true that a nation can only truly advance if it has to go through the fire from time to time. It is through this process that we ultimately attained our freedom, and it is perhaps because that process stopped that we grew soft and indolent. We see a curious spectacle around us in the world. The very success that men aim at and struggle for leads often enough to a deterioration of that vital quality which brings real progress to the nation. Failure or lack of success is often the spur to greater effort. Victors in war try to overreach themselves and, not satisfied with what they have got, aim at more. Thus they get entangled and lose the fruits of victory. The defeated drag themselves up from the very depths of despair and make good. That surely does not mean that victory is bad and defeat good. But it does mean, I think, that both victory and defeat depend ultimately on some inner quality, and if this is lacking, then other and unforeseen consequences follow.

4. I am led to these thoughts when I look around the world today and when I consider the state of our own country. We have a great heritage, both old and new. But somehow we do not live up to it and grow slack and lazy and lack discipline. The great urge to go ahead in a common brotherhood of

thought and action is wanting. It was this very quality of disciplined and co-ordinated action that was the great strength of Sardar Patel's life and work, and it is that that we must learn from him, above all other things. India has, I am convinced, fine material, if only we can utilise it to the best advantage, if only we can bring back to our minds the flaming ideal of service for a cause, which many of us knew in our younger days. It is not so much machinery that we want or even food or other goods from abroad, although they are desirable; what we want are men and women with a purpose and with a will to achieve and with a capacity to work together without finding too much fault with each other. We used to be criticised in days gone by and called a nation of talkers and not of men of action. That criticism faded away when Gandhiji came on the scene. Are we now reverting to our previous habits and justifying that criticism?

5. You will forgive me for thinking aloud in this letter, but I have to bear a heavy burden and my mind gropes about to find the light. I realise all too well my own failings and imperfections; I know that the great work and service that India demands cannot be fulfilled by a few individuals. We have to set the whole nation, including ourselves of course, on the right path. At this moment when a trusted guide and friend has passed away we have to think afresh and pull ourselves up. There is far too great a tendency for us to forget and ignore our own work and duty and to concentrate on condemnation of others. This picture is equally applicable to the international sphere.

6. The tragedy of Sardar Patel's death has rather overshadowed other happenings in India. Yet those problems remain and will have to be dealt with. There is, first of all, the food problem, and recently a Food Conference was held in Bombay. You must know all that happened there.<sup>1</sup> We have been living through difficult times and large numbers of our people have suffered from lack of adequate food. As the Food Minister said, we have been living from ship to mouth. Ships are coming in almost daily with foodgrains from far off countries for which we pay heavily and at the cost of much else that we might do. But food is the first necessity and we cannot afford to have our people starve. We have therefore made every effort to purchase large quantities of foodstuffs during the coming months. Those efforts are continuing. We have to do this and yet we must realise that this dependence upon others is not good for the country. It may be the easiest way today, but we pay for it tomorrow and the day after. The problem, therefore, is not one of importing food from outside but, somehow or other, improve our rural economy and

1. The All India Food Ministers Conference held from 11 to 13 December fixed the target for food imports at 3.7 million tons to meet deficiencies and build up reserves and agreed that controls should continue and the price level maintained. It wished the Grow-More-Food Campaign to be implemented vigorously.



produce and procure more food. It will be dangerous for us to forget this elementary fact and to imagine that we are dealing satisfactorily with our food problem by importing large quantities from abroad.

7. There has also been a conference of the Rehabilitation Ministers in Delhi, where all the rehabilitation work of the country during the past three years was reviewed.<sup>2</sup> That work has been notable and can bear comparison with such work anywhere else in the world. Nevertheless, the problem was so vast that a tremendous deal remains to be done. I believe we are making good progress. What is necessary, however, is always to remember the human aspect of this problem and not to consider it as a matter of figures and files. Millions of human beings are involved. In particular, we have always to keep in mind the boys and girls, children of these refugees, and give them our first attention. Second in importance come the unattached women.

8. As you know, Mastar Tara Singh was released as a result of an order of the High Court. I regret to say that his activities have not been desirable since his release.<sup>3</sup> Efforts are made to bring about strange alliances,<sup>4</sup> the only common factor being a dislike of the present Government and its policies. Looking back over the last twenty years or more, one is struck by the extreme poverty of Sikh leadership in thought and action. Everybody knows the fine qualities of the Sikhs. They are excellent soldiers, good farmers and fine mechanics and craftsmen. In spite of this very good material they have repeatedly allowed themselves to be misled and, unfortunately, even past experience does not teach wisdom. I refer of course to some Sikhs and not all.

9. Recent judgements of some High Courts have made us think about our Constitution. Is it adequate in its present form to meet the situation we have to face? We must accept fully the judgements of our superior courts, but if they find that there is a lacuna in the Constitution, then we have to remedy that. This matter is under consideration. There has also been a tendency on the

2. The conference, meeting from 11 to 13 December, made recommendations covering schemes of house-building, financial assistance, vocational training, care and maintenance of old and infirm persons and homeless women and children as part of the future policy of rehabilitation of displaced persons from 'West Pakistan. For Nehru's address at the conference, see *ante*, pp. 66-69.
3. Arrested on 7 September 1950, Master Tara Singh was released on 28 November. At a meeting at Amritsar on 3 December, he accused the Congress of creating a rift between Hindus and Sikhs for political reasons, demanded dismissal of the Congress Government in Punjab and repeated his demand for a Punjabi-speaking province. On 13 December, addressing a Sikh congregation in Delhi, he said that "the Sikh religion today is in great danger and in order to protect it great sacrifices are needed." He also denounced the introduction of the Hindu Code Bill in Parliament.
4. The Akali Dal (Master Tara Singh group) had invited the communists and others to join the Akali Dal to form an anti-Congress front in Punjab. The Hindu Mahasabha made its support to Tara Singh conditional on his not pressing the demand for a linguistic province.

part of some High Court Judges to indulge in strong criticism of Government not only from the Bench but from other platforms.<sup>5</sup> This has led sometimes to an attempt to a reply to that criticism in Parliament.<sup>6</sup> Both are unfortunate and a controversy between a Government and a High Court is unbecoming and harmful. Both, therefore, have to function with restraint and proper decorum. The independence of the judiciary has been emphasized in our Constitution and we must guard it as something precious. But if our judges make pronouncements on controversial political problems out of court, then controversy is bound to arise.

10. The new situation on our frontiers has led us to reconsider our defence position in regard to those frontiers. I do not think there is the slightest danger of a military invasion from or *via* Tibet. But it is always possible for trouble-makers to come across and we have to be on our guard against them. We have taken some steps already in regard to this and we propose to take more, as occasion demands.

11. This raises the whole question of our defence forces and, more especially, our Army. Our people appear to be developing what might be called a military outlook.<sup>7</sup> They demand more and more in the way of armed forces and at the same time call incessantly for economy. Any major dent in our expenditure can only come from the defence forces. And so we have to face this difficult problem of increasing our Army, as some people demand, and reducing the expenditure upon it, as others or the same people say. Obviously we cannot have it both ways. Defence does not consist merely of uniformed men marching with guns. It consists of an industrial background also as well as adequate resources and a high morale among the people. We have to develop our industry or else we do not progress or increase our resources.

12. We realise perfectly that we can take no risks about defence and have to keep a first-rate army and an efficient air force and navy. At the same time

5. Replying to B.G. Kher, who had forwarded extracts from the speeches of some judges, Nehru wrote on 13 December 1950: "I have myself noticed with concern the tendency of High Court Judges to deliver sermons outside the High Court on important matters of public policy. I confess I do not like it. I do not quite know what to do about it. I have drawn the attention of the Chief Justice of India politely to this new tendency." On 16 December 1950, he wrote to H.J. Kania, Chief Justice of India: "We are living through difficult times and the only way to face our problems is for all of us to show some restraint and understanding of them. We have to build up our conventions."
6. N.V. Gadgil, during a debate in Parliament on the Delhi Premises (Requisition and Eviction) Amendment Bill from 29 November to 3 December, observed that "if the judiciary extends its jurisdiction and pronounces that a particular piece of legislation is undesirable or unreasonable, it is going far beyond its legitimate jurisdiction."
7. S.P. Mookerjee, speaking in Parliament on 6 December, urged that India be made "militarily strong." Kripalani on the same day stressed the need for making India's "military and industrial potential strong." *The Statesman* in its editorial of 9 December made a plea for "conscription" and more "expenditure on civil defence."



we feel that we should, considering all the circumstances, make some reduction in the Army.<sup>8</sup> This is a brave step, which possibly might not be understood by many of our people, more especially in present circumstances. But in the larger view of things, we feel that this is a right step even from the point of view of efficiency in the defence forces, and much more so from the point of view of saving some money for other purposes. There have been many protests from State Governments at the disbandment of some temporary units.<sup>9</sup> Those protests were often justified from the point of view of that State. And yet I am sure that if the overall picture was considered by the Government of the State concerned, they would agree to the step we are taking.

13. We keep our defence forces for defence, as their name implies. This is important to remember as our whole policy depends on how we look at this. We are not thinking in terms of aggression anywhere. Our defence consists in guarding our widespread frontiers. It includes the defence of Bhutan and Sikkim, which are our protected States. In a wider sense it also includes the defence of Nepal, which is an independent country. The real defence of India must lie on the main range of the Himalayas and we cannot afford to allow an enemy to cross over even into Nepal, for that would endanger the security of India. I made this clear in Parliament the other day.<sup>10</sup>

14. I am afraid that our relations with Pakistan continue to be as strained as ever and we have made no progress in regard to any of the major points of dispute. We published the long drawn out correspondence between our Government and that of Pakistan,<sup>11</sup> and you must have seen that. Since the publication, there had been further letters<sup>12</sup> which will be published soon. They do not carry the matter any further. But there is one gain and that is a statement by the Prime Minister of Pakistan that Pakistan would not attack India. On our part, we made a similar statement very clearly a year ago and we stick to it. Thus, so far as India is concerned we are committed not to attack any country unless we are ourselves attacked.

15. In the course of the last fortnight, a treaty was signed with Sikkim.<sup>13</sup> The situation in Nepal has been rather static. The insurgents continue to be

8. The Government had decided to demobilize 50,000 men from the Army.

9. See *ante*, p. 167.

10. See *ante*, p. 433.

11. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 14 Part II, pp. 31-34 and Vol. 15 Part I, pp. 316-318 and 320-327; see also *ante*, pp. 303-307 and 310-316. Nehru placed the correspondence in Parliament on 28 November 1950.

12. See *ante*, pp. 320-325.

13. On 5 December, a treaty was signed between India and Sikkim providing for the continuance of Sikkim as a protectorate of India enjoying autonomy in regard to its internal affairs and India being responsible for its defence, external affairs and communications. The treaty provided for a duty-free trade between India and Sikkim.

active in a relatively small way on the border regions of Nepal. But even these activities have a powerful effect on the Government there. It is obvious that the people of Nepal are eager for reform and changes and are not at all anxious that the present Government should continue as it is. I made a brief statement about Nepal in Parliament.<sup>14</sup> This was to the effect that we are continuing to recognise the old King and that we thought major reforms were essential for the peace and stability of Nepal, in which we were so intensely interested. We are interested also in Nepal remaining an independent State. Some people imagine that all this trouble in Nepal is due to our intrigues and that we want to merge it with India. This is completely false.

16. We want Nepal as an independent State, but I also made it clear in Parliament that we do not welcome the interference of foreign countries there. This is the only policy that any Government in India can pursue, because of the geography of Nepal and her other contacts with India.

17. We have recently had visits from some representatives of the Nepalese Government and we had long talks with them in which we explained our position clearly. Those talks have not borne any fruit yet and we are still waiting for some kind of a reply to our proposals. We have made it clear that we intend to continue recognising the old King, who is at present our guest in Delhi. Any other course will prevent the return of peace and stability of Nepal. It would mean an attempt to consolidate the present autocratic and rather extraordinary regime in that country. We have tried to find a middle way of peace which would not bring too great a break in the Government of Nepal and which would at the same time ensure democratic reform. We are anxious that the civil war there should stop as soon as possible and a fair settlement arrived at.

18. Pakistan and Nepal are important for us because they are our neighbours. Tibet is also important for the same reason. But the fate of the world, for the moment, is tied up with events in the Far East of Asia. Slowly, but almost inevitably, we seem to march towards a major disaster—World War III. I do not want to say that war is inevitable and I do not believe it. And yet gradually the lamps of peace go out. You will have seen that our representative at Lake Success, Shri B.N. Rau, has been making persistent efforts to find some way to avoid war. I think that all countries, however much they may differ from each other, believe in the sincerity of India's desire for peace and have some appreciation for her efforts to this end, even though they might not agree with them. I fear that our efforts have not met with much success.

19. The United Kingdom has often agreed with us in these matters and supported us to some extent. But, unfortunately, public declarations become more and more warlike and aggressive. The tone of President Truman's broadcast

14. See *ante*, pp. 432-434.



two days ago does not encourage hopes of peace. Neither does the unyielding attitude of the Chinese Government. In this particular matter, the main protagonists are the U.S.A. and China. Of course, behind China is the policy and strength of the U.S.S.R., just as the U.S.A. have other Powers lining up with them. The latest news is that General Wu, the representative of the new China, who had gone to Lake Success, has asked for his return visa to China.<sup>15</sup> That is a fateful step, for that means a break and an end to the efforts thus far made for a settlement. The war will go on in Korea and that war has already ceased to be a Korean war. At any moment it may spread to China, and that again will, in all likelihood, lead to a conflagration in other parts of the world.

20. The situation in Europe does not appear to be so critical as in the Far East. But recent developments there also tend towards a crisis. This will centre round the proposal for German rearmament. Germany, you will remember, was not allowed to have an army or even manufacture war material.<sup>16</sup> This was the decision after the war. But now fear of Russia is inducing the U.S.A. to think of arming the Germans. This has been accepted by the U.K. and, after long argument and most reluctantly, by France also.<sup>17</sup> France has not yet shed its fear of German armies which have on three occasions during the last eighty years or less ravaged France. So, France was reluctant, but pressure of circumstances, as well as from other countries, and a greater fear overcoming the lesser, induced her to give this consent. On the other hand, the Soviet Union has always made it clear that it will not tolerate German rearmament.<sup>18</sup> Russia has enough cause to remember German armies marching and destroying vast areas in the Soviet Union. Thus this question of German rearmament is a matter on which there might well be a conflict.

21. The Korean war has led military strategists and war departments furiously to think. It has upset many preconceived ideas. It was thought at the end of the last world war that air power was dominant and could stop, at least, any invading army and perhaps even bring about a victory. The atomic bomb was

15. Protesting against the denial of an opportunity to address the First Committee on the question of Formosa, Wu Hsiu-chuan released to the press, on 16 December, his speech meant for the Committee. He also criticised the thirteen-Power resolution which envisaged a ceasefire in Korea prior to negotiations with the Chinese. He along with other members of the delegation left New York on 19 December for London on their way to Peking.

16. This had been decided at the Potsdam Conference.

17. On 6 December, France accepted the compromise proposals envisaging formation of small-sized 'combat teams' without heavy armaments in place of divisions of armies, with the condition that the total number of active combatants would not exceed one-fifth of those of the forces of the Atlantic alliance.

18. The Soviet Union, in its notes to the British, the French and the U.S. Governments on 3 November and 15 December 1950, conveyed its disapproval of German rearmament.

supposed to be overwhelming in its results. Now grave doubts have arisen about this line of thought, for in Korea almost one-sided air warfare on a big scale and widespread bombing, involving tremendous destruction, did not make too much difference to advancing armies. So the importance of air power diminished somewhat and the importance of the old land army increased. This has a powerful effect on the world balance of power, for the major land armies today are in the Soviet Union and in China.

22. It is exceedingly difficult to prophesy as to what will happen, but it may be said that because of fear of world war, any major step leading to it will be avoided as long as possible. Yet the drift continues and no man knows when this drift may end in a plunge. We have to be wary so that whatever development takes place, does not upset us and does not make us lose our heads. We must be prepared for all consequences. That means not only physical preparedness, but much more so a mental state. That means also a disciplined nation.

23. As I have written to you already, I intend going to London for the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference at the beginning of the New Year. It is difficult to think of leaving India just at this stage when so many problems upset us and so many new burdens have to be carried. But I feel I must attend this Conference. I shall go with the confidence that my colleagues at the Centre and in the States will carry the burden of the day wisely and with courage.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## V

New Delhi  
December 31, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

Tomorrow I am leaving Delhi for Bangalore and after a brief stay there I leave for England. Tomorrow is New Year's day. That day marks not only the end of the month and of the year but also the end of the half century. We stand poised in the middle of this twentieth century, which has already brought two World Wars and many smaller ones, and which now looks apprehensively and fearfully at the prospect of a third world war.

2. In our own country we have had shock after shock and it would almost appear that some perverse fate was pursuing us, or the gods wished to punish us. What a succession of calamities we have had and, to top them all, we lost



a great captain of our forces who, with consummate skill, had steered the bark of India between many rocks and through stormy seas. The seas continue to be stormy and new rocks appear all round us, and we wanted that stout heart and strong arm more than ever before to meet these new crises.

3. I am going to England to attend the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference and the principal subject for discussion will no doubt be the world situation, and more particularly the situation in the Far East. It would be folly to talk in too optimistic a vein when darkness descends upon us and the lights progressively go out. And yet it would not be right either to become gloomy and pessimistic and to lose all hope. There is always hope and there is always time for right effort in a right direction. That effort can never be wasted if it is properly directed, even though it may not produce the results aimed at. I do not think that the world situation is completely out of hand or beyond repair. But it is a fact that it is an exceedingly dangerous situation and powerful forces are pushing us towards the abyss of world war. It is easy to cast blame on this country or that, and in the prevailing passion of the moment, the other party looks all black and without any redeeming feature. And yet, if we look round the world, where do we find any real desire for war? Everywhere—in Asia, in Europe and in America—there is a passionate desire for avoidance of war. But fear and anger and, to some extent, even considerations of prestige, drive millions of peace-loving people towards war.

4. Thus far the efforts made at Lake Success have failed to find a way out. As you know, our Representative, Shri B.N. Rau, has played an important part in these efforts. We have also carried on diplomatic activities to the same end. Perhaps one result has been achieved, in some measure, and that is a general belief in India's *bona fides* and her desire for peace. That is something gained.

5. There has been much talk of a ceasefire in Korea. But war continues and we appear to be on the verge of a big advance by the Chinese forces, volunteers or regular troops, whatever they might be. If this continues, there is little doubt that the U.N. forces cannot stay very long in Korea, or at any rate they will be confined to a narrow region. The Chinese Government has made it clear that they will not accept ceasefire unless some previous understanding is arrived at about the general withdrawal of foreign troops from Korea and unless a clear statement is made about the future of Formosa. This statement, according to them, must reiterate the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations, which promised to hand back Formosa or Taiwan to China. The actual handing over need not take place immediately and can be discussed. But the principle must be admitted here and now. Formosa indeed has become the crux of the question in the Far East. On this question there is a wide gap between China and the U.S.A. There is even a difference of opinion between the U.K. and the U.S.A.

6. The basic fact of the situation in the Far East is the emergence of China as a strong, stable and centralised State. China is undoubtedly a Great Power in every sense of the term today, and the Chinese Government and people want to be treated as such. Because they have not been so treated, they are angry and resentful and are not prepared to talk. According to them, there has been a piling up of insult on them and all their efforts to enter the U.N. or to deal with the Korean crisis, which affects them so intimately, have been checked and opposed by some other Powers. With the past memory of colonialism, they are in no mood to accept anybody's patronage.

7. It is important to remember this Chinese background. The whole balance of power has changed not only in the Far East but in the world because of this new China. Very gradually a realisation of this is coming to the Western countries, but the process is slow. It will have to be much faster if disaster is to be avoided.

8. As I have told you previously, there is no foreseeable danger on India's frontiers. Indeed our Ambassador in China as well as the Ambassador for Burma have been assured that China has no territorial ambitions. There has been some mention of the old map of China which shows some parts of India and Burma as being parts of China.<sup>1</sup> It has been pointed out to us by the Chinese authorities that these maps are old maps and they do not rely upon them. They have had no time to draw new maps. We have been further told by the Chinese Government that they do not think there are any problems between Asian countries like China, India and Burma which cannot be solved through normal diplomatic channels. I think this assurance expresses correctly their present intentions.

9. In America, a state of emergency has been declared and many other steps have been taken to switch on the entire industrial effort towards war production. Steps are being taken with speed to increase considerably the present colossal figures of production. This is a danger point and, naturally, creates an atmosphere of coming war. It has other consequences also. If the mighty production machine of America is turned towards war production, then it will not be able to supply the needs of other countries in terms of capital goods. If there is any surplus in the U.S., this will go to Western Europe, which is considered the first priority from the point of view of a possible war. We are, therefore, not likely to get much or anything in the shape of machinery, etc., from the U.S. Inflationary tendencies will be more and more marked all over the world. The U.S. will buy up raw material in all parts of the world and pay heavily for it. Thus prices will go up and will affect India too. While we work for peace, we have to be prepared for all contingencies and the greatest amount of preparation is necessary on the economic front.

1. See *ante*, pp. 348 and 546.



10. In Nepal, there have been serious developments during the past two weeks. The insurgents of the Nepali Congress have captured large areas in the Terai, and in Kathmandu itself there have been great demonstrations in favour of King Tribhuvan. This is something quite unique in Nepal's history. It is clear that the present Rana regime is cracking up. But a vested interest does not easily let go. I made a statement in regard to Nepal in Parliament.<sup>2</sup> In this I made three points: One, that King Tribhuvan should continue to be King. We attached importance to this because we saw no way of returning to peace unless this was acknowledged. Our second point was in regard to a constituent assembly. The third point was about an interim Government containing an adequate number of popular Ministers. The Nepalese Government have sent an answer, which is not satisfactory. They still insist on continuing with their child prince as King. They agree to a constituent assembly. But their ideas of an interim government do not conform to ours. We have made all this clear to them again and there the matter stands. The position is such that delay in coming to a settlement will probably weaken the Rana regime still further and the demands of the insurgents will increase. We have pointed this out clearly to the Nepalese Government.

11. You must be aware of the organisational changes that have taken place in the Government of India and our Central Ministries.<sup>3</sup> Owing to Sardar Patel's death, a very serious gap was created in the Cabinet. I decided not to add to the Cabinet and I induced Shri Rajagopalachari and Shri Gopaldaswami Ayyangar to take up respectively the portfolios of Home and States. The three Ministries of Industry and Supply, Commerce, and Works, Mines and Power, have been reshuffled and grouped differently.<sup>4</sup> I think that this new group is more logical and scientific and, of course, it helps our economy drive.

12. You will have noticed from my statements in Parliament that we are in the process of reducing our Army somewhat.<sup>5</sup> This is rather curious when all world is rushing ahead to add to its defence apparatus. We have decided to reduce expenditure in our Defence Services a little chiefly on the grounds of economy. But we have kept in view the efficiency of the Army for such demands as might be made upon it. I do not think the proposed reduction in the Army will make any difference to its fighting quality.

2. See *ante*, pp. 396-397.

3. On 26 December 1950.

4. Harekrushna Mahtab, Minister of Industries, became Minister of Commerce and Industry; N.V. Gadgil, Minister of Works, Mines and Power, became Minister of Works, Production and Supply; and Sri Prakasa, Minister of Commerce, became Minister of Natural Resources and Scientific Research.

5. On 21 December 1950, Nehru announced the Government's decision to reduce the size of the Indian Army without impairing its fighting strength. Reduction was to be effected in areas "not so well trained" or "equipped."

13. Food is still problem No. 1 for us. We are making strenuous efforts to get food from all parts of the world, including China. But enough shipping is not available. That creates a big bottleneck. I fear that we are going to have a hard time during the next six months or more. Blame is cast on the Central Government and some of this criticism might be justified. But I feel that there is not enough realisation in the States of the enormous difficulties that the Central Government has to face. As I have said, we are trying to get as much as we can from abroad and we shall continue our efforts to this end. States must realise, however, that it does not help much to demand more and more, when that more is not available either in India or abroad. It is essential that our rationing system should continue. To break it up would be most unfortunate and it might not be possible to reintroduce it easily.

14. We have had a visit in Delhi from the Australian Prime Minister, Mr Menzies. During his brief stay here, we discussed with him many problems of common interest. I shall meet him again in London soon.

15. You will have noticed in the newspapers that the Pakistan Government has been insisting on the inclusion of the Kashmir issue in the agenda of the Prime Ministers' Conference in London. We heard about this today in a message from Mr Attlee.<sup>6</sup> To include such an issue in the agenda would be entirely opposed to the practice and conventions governing such conferences and Mr Attlee has expressed his inability to do so. But he suggested to Mr Liaquat Ali Khan that all the Prime Ministers might meet informally and consider Kashmir. I have informed him that while I am prepared to discuss this matter with him or with any Prime Minister informally and separately, I do not agree to this kind of round-table discussion, even though it might be called informal, by all the Prime Ministers together. That would be a bad precedent and would lead to no result.

16. We have to take an overall view of the situation. This involves an appreciation of the international situation and of the economic position in India. The international situation, whether war comes or not, will continue to be a very difficult one and we cannot rely upon getting supplies from abroad in any quantity. We are thus thrown upon our resources and we must plan more or less accordingly. Of course, we shall try to get our essential needs met as far as possible from supplies from abroad. We are trying to do that in regard to food. But we have to be prepared for any contingency. If an adequate supply of foodgrains is not forthcoming from abroad, the only possible way to meet the situation is to spread out the burden all over the country and for all of us to share in it. It is not possible and certainly not desirable, for a part in India to suffer terribly while others are better off. Nor can we follow the path of least resistance and reduce our commitments by putting an end to rationing.

6. See *ante*, p. 278.



That might well lead to disaster. The only way to meet such a situation is to spread our deficit of food, such as it may be, over the whole country. It does not help very much to discuss past policies and errors. We have to meet a difficult situation and we cannot throw up our hands because it is difficult.

17. Coming to the economic situation in the country, we have to realise that this may well grow worse because of international factors, inflation, etc. We have to explore all possible avenues of economy and of increasing our revenues. The first thing to do is not to take any step which might lead to a reduction in our revenues. Of course, any addition would have to be carefully thought out so as not to result in a paralysis of the economic system.

18. In this connection I should like you to consider the question of Prohibition. This is a delicate matter about which there is strong feeling. But we are dealing with a very critical situation and we have to face that situation frankly. In those States where there is no Prohibition at present, it would be unwise to introduce it at this stage. In other States where there is Prohibition in some measure, it would be desirable to have full enquiry made as to the results of it. Some of these results cannot be measured but others can be. For instance, how far has illicit distillation proceeded? What is the general effect on health? There is always a danger in social reform of doing something which, while meeting one evil, produces other and greater evils. This is quite apart from the financial aspect of the question, though finance cannot be ignored. Therefore, I would strongly suggest that a proper enquiry be made in this matter so that we may know what the facts are. On the basis of those facts decisions can then be taken.

19. All our development schemes and social reform schemes are suffering terribly because of lack of money. Take housing, for instance. That seems to me almost of first importance, next to food itself, in order to raise not only the physical well-being of our people, but also their moral tone. We cannot expect any moral standards or efficient work when people have no decent conditions of living, and yet we can do very little about housing because of financial difficulties. There are many other social services and cultural projects which we could well take in hand, if we had the resources to do so. In England, in spite of the great difficulties created by the war, the Government has insisted on carrying on with vast social projects. You all know about the British Health Insurance Scheme,<sup>7</sup> which is a very costly business, but which has brought relief to vast numbers of people. Even in regard to purely cultural activities, like encouragement of national theatres, etc., the U.K. Government has gone ahead attaching importance to them. Sir Stafford Cripps told me last year that

7. The National Health Service Act, 1946, which became operational in July 1948, provided for the financing of free medical treatment by the State to everyone.

whatever the financial difficulty, he did not wish the cultural level of his people to be lowered or to sacrifice tomorrow for today's need.

20. During the last forty-five years of my acquaintance with British conditions, I have noticed a progressive and marked change in the drinking habits of people there. They drink much less and one hardly sees a drunken man anywhere. What the reasons for this are I do not quite know. One of them certainly is the very high cost of alcoholic drinks. Another, I think, is a certain change in social values and standards. This change might be said to have taken place in several countries of Europe. At the same time, it may interest you to know that the revenue from duties on alcoholic drinks in the U.K. is very great. I believe that the annual revenue now from duties on alcoholic drinks as well as various kinds of tobacco, including cigarettes, etc., in the U.K. is 900 million pounds. This is a colossal sum and it is largely on the basis of this that the U.K. has carried on its numerous educational and cultural activities.

21. We cannot base any activity on money derived from evil sources. That is perfectly true. But what exactly is an evil and how do we measure it? There are social evils of varying degrees. Today we have to meet the very serious evil of blackmarketing, which from a social point of view is much worse than individual lapses. Poverty and the effects of poverty are a terrible evil. Then again what may be considered a social evil in one country may not be so in another. We pride ourselves upon our high moral standards and yet I think it may be said with truth that the standards in England in many ways are higher. Apparently, moral standards in this country are more connected with eating and drinking than with anything else.

22. You must have been following the proceedings of the conference of some rulers held in Bombay recently.<sup>8</sup> This has no great importance and we need not worry too much about it. But, nevertheless, it is a bad sign and we have to make it clear that no individual in India, whoever he may be, can challenge the authority of the State or of Parliament. It is obvious that some of these rulers are intriguing and trying to create trouble. They are not in a position to do much but anyone can create a little trouble. So far as we are concerned, we are not going to tolerate any defiance of the State's authority.

23. On this eve of the New Year, I look round and see a multitude of problems and difficulties. I do not feel in the slightest degree despondent. Rather I feel that this is a challenge to us all and that we are going to meet

8. The conference held on 26 and 27 December under the chairmanship of the Gaekwad of Baroda pledged loyalty to India but noted with regret that the hopes and aspirations of the Princes had been shattered as they had been denied privileges and honours. The rulers also concluded that the merger of States had widened the gulf between the Princes and their peoples.



it with firmness and wisdom. But we can only do so if we all pull together and forget our petty differences. Whether it is the Congress or the governmental apparatus of the State, we have to pull together. It is time we forgot all the factors that separate us and put us in different compartments, and thought only of the country as a whole and of the dangers and perils that surround us. I appeal to you and to your colleagues for help and cooperation in this great task that confronts us. I am sure I shall have that not only from you, but from vast numbers of people in this country. This New Year will test us to the uttermost. We will survive this test or any other challenge that may come to us if we pull together and revive somewhat the spirit that brought freedom to this country.

24. In this hope and belief I send you my greetings for this New Year of hard work and struggle and, I hope, achievement.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## VI

New Delhi  
February 1, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

I am writing after one full month. During this month I have been away from India for nearly three weeks. Soon after my return to Delhi, I had to go to Ahmedabad for the meeting of the All India Congress Committee. I returned today.

2. As you know, I went to London to attend the Conference of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers. This Conference was largely concerned with the international situation. The tempo of events has been fast since then and much that was said and done at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference is now past history. Nevertheless, it might interest you to have a brief account of what transpired at this Conference and the part that India played in it.

3. First of all, there was no discussion about the Kashmir issue at the Conference, though references were made to it. It was made quite clear that no such issue could be raised at the Conference. Subsequently, some private talks took place about Kashmir.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, no discussion took place at the Conference about any defence measures. There was a discussion about the general military

1. See *ante*, pp. 280-284.

situation both in the Far East and in Europe.<sup>2</sup> Apart from the Conference itself, there was a meeting of some Prime Ministers who were chiefly interested in the position of the Middle East. I believe that certain discussions relating to defence took place there.<sup>3</sup> I was not present at that meeting.

4. The discussions at the Prime Ministers' Conference related chiefly to the Far East situation, European situation and to economic matters.<sup>4</sup> As is usual at such conferences, no formal resolutions were passed. Press communiques were issued from time to time and, on the last day, a kind of declaration or manifesto was issued which no doubt you must have seen. In addition to this, however, the question of sending instructions to our representatives at Lake Success also had to be discussed, as the First (Political) Committee of the U.N. was then meeting at Lake Success and considering various resolutions relating to the Korean crisis. Instructions had, of course, to be sent separately by each country to its representative, but an attempt was made to have, as far as possible, a similar approach. In fact there was a great deal of similarity in the instructions that were sent, though the emphasis varied slightly. It was as a result of these instructions that the three-man committee framed their 'principles' for a peaceful settlement of the Korean question. These 'principles' were subsequently adopted by the First Committee of the U.N. It should be noted that the U.S.A. as well as most other countries voted for this resolution in the First Committee. All the Commonwealth countries voted for it. Our representative, Shri B.N. Rau, however, made it clear how he interpreted certain parts of the

2. The communique issued at the end of the Conference on 12 January 1951 declared that the on-going discussions on the Far Eastern situation in the First Committee of the General Assembly "were kept under daily review and the Commonwealth Prime Ministers were able to exchange views regarding the means by which their representatives in New York could best advance those discussions towards a successful conclusion." During a review of the European situation the Prime Ministers of the U.K. and Canada "explained their obligations under the terms of the NATO treaty and the measures which were being taken to meet them."
3. On 9 January, Bevin gave the Conference an account of his negotiations in London with the Foreign Minister of Egypt on her demands for withdrawal of British troops from the Suez Canal zone and incorporation of the Sudan with Egypt. He also spoke of the efforts being made to improve the economic and social standing of many countries of this area.
4. On 10 January, the Prime Ministers discussed the economic problems of the Commonwealth and other countries arising from shortages of raw materials and other supplies. They "recognized the need for international arrangements to deal with these questions and recommended continuous consultations between Commonwealth countries on this subject.



resolution.<sup>5</sup> This interpretation, I might add, was generally accepted by the Commonwealth Conference, though in the First Committee only Shri B.N. Rau made this clear.

5. To go back a little. The general position we had to face was more or less as follows:

It was admitted that the North Koreans had committed aggression to begin with. At the same time it was, I believe, the general opinion that if the People's Republic of China had been admitted to the U.N. previously, in all probability there would have been no trouble in Korea and the matter would have been thrashed out in the U.N. itself. The North Korean invasion of South Korea met with considerable success till a landing of U.N. troops took place at Inchon near Seoul. Soon after this the question arose whether the U.N. forces, which meant mainly the U.S.A. troops, should cross the 38th parallel or not. You will remember that our Ambassador in Peking was told definitely that any crossing of the 38th parallel by the U.S.A. troops would not be tolerated by the Chinese Government, as they would consider this a prelude to an invasion of Manchuria in China. This message was conveyed by us to the U.K. and the U.S.A. Nevertheless, the 38th parallel was crossed. About two weeks later the North Korean troops aided by Chinese forces (who are described as volunteers by the Chinese Government) attacked the U.S.A. forces and drove them back.

6. This created a dangerous situation for the U.N. forces and there was a good deal of heart-searching as to whether the 38th parallel should have been crossed or not. It became patent that somebody had erred greatly. General MacArthur had been so much in the wrong as to say forty-eight hours before this major reverse that the war was practically ended and his forces would be home for Christmas.<sup>6</sup> This could only be due to a complete lack of information of the position or some other major error. Anyhow, it was generally recognised that the crossing of the 38th parallel had been a grievous mistake. Almost every person concerned denied responsibility for it and cast the blame on others. Even General MacArthur stated that it was not at his instance that this had been done. It is not yet clear as to who exactly was responsible. In any event, this shows an extreme lack of coordination on the side of the U.N. forces and the countries they represented.

5. Rau said that the implementation of the ceasefire plan should be monitored by a small body and the ceasefire effected immediately so that the implementation of the other proposals was not hindered. He also stressed that the question of Formosa should be settled in "conformity with existing international obligations, that is, the Potsdam and Cairo Declarations."
6. Announcing on 24 November 1950 the launching of an assault against Chinese and North Korean forces to "end the war", MacArthur hoped "to have the boys home by Christmas."

7. The result of this was that, in a military sense, the position was very disadvantageous to the U.N. forces and there appeared no probability of anything happening which might better their position. In the normal course they would be driven out of Korea. Even if the war spread to China, it was by no means clear how any effective steps could be taken against China, apart from great destruction by bombing.

8. There was thus a fear of the war spreading to China, which in its turn might well lead to war in Europe and, indeed, world war. The situation was an exceedingly dangerous one. If world war came, Europe was considered to have top priority. Hence it was not easy to divert any considerable forces to the Far East. Even in Europe the position was very difficult from the military point of view.

9. Quite apart from the merits of the case, another difficulty arose. The U.N. did not recognise the People's Government of China, nor did it recognise the North Korean Government. And yet the U.N. issued directions to both these Governments. The reply was that if you do not recognise us, we can hardly be expected to carry out your directions. The Chinese case was that in the name of the U.N., an attempt was going to be made to invade China with the intention of destroying the present regime there. In the past, invasions of China had come *via* Manchuria and Korea. Manchuria was also vital to China because it was the only industrially developed part of it. The Japanese example was cited. The first step had been possession of Formosa, then Korea, then Manchuria and later attacking China itself. The Chinese Government therefore attached the greatest importance to Formosa and based its claim on the Cairo Declaration of the Great Powers which had been reaffirmed in January 1950 by President Truman. In Formosa a large army under Marshal Chiang Kai-shek was kept in readiness for the invasion of China and this apparently was receiving help from the U.S. General MacArthur was well known as a supporter of Marshal Chiang.

10. Attempts had been made in the U.N. to pass a resolution branding China as an aggressor in Korea. Various other resolutions had also been put forward. It was clear, however, that if such a resolution was passed, the chances of any negotiation would fade away. Hence attempts were made to postpone consideration of all such resolutions and to find a way out for a negotiated settlement.

11. It was with this background that we met in London. Every Commonwealth country represented there was anxious to avoid war, because they fully realised that the consequences would be disastrous. The worst sufferer would be Europe. There was thus a strong feeling that every attempt should be made to start negotiations with the Chinese Government. It was recognised that there could be no settlement in Korea if China was left out. Owing to the fact that India was the only major country, apart from the Soviet, which had



relations with the Chinese Government, India came to play rather an important role in these preliminary approaches. Two questions stood out. One was Formosa and the other the question of ceasefire, as to whether ceasefire should precede negotiations or should follow certain decisions, chiefly relating to Formosa and withdrawal of foreign armies from Korea. There was not much difference between the attitude of most of the Commonwealth countries and that of China as it subsequently emerged. But there was a big gap between the Chinese attitude and that of the U.S.A., both in regard to ceasefire and Formosa. Even this gap, however, became much less after the adoption of the 'principles' resolution by the First Committee.

12. The reply of the Chinese Government was worded rather aggressively, but in fact it was very far from rejection. Some of the proposals were accepted and some counter suggestions were put forward. There was, however, an outcry that China had rejected this offer. It almost appeared that some people were anxious that China should reject it. It was pointed out by us that China had not rejected the offer. Subsequent clarification made this even more evident. Certain questions were put to the Chinese Government by the Canadian Prime Minister through us. The Chinese answer was definitely conciliatory and it appeared that China was anxious to have a settlement by negotiation. This was recognised to a large extent by many of the Commonwealth countries including the U.K. But feelings in the U.S.A. ran very high and there was an insistence on passing the aggressor resolution.<sup>7</sup> It seemed to us that it would be tragic in the extreme to take a step just then, when the chances of a settlement were brighter than ever before, which would practically put an end to the idea of negotiation. We tried our utmost, therefore, to prevent any such step being taken and for preliminary negotiations to take place. In this we were supported by a number of Asian countries. However, ultimately the Asian effort was defeated and, two days ago, the aggressor resolution was passed.

13. I must confess to a feeling of deep regret and some frustration at this failure of our attempts which, at one time, appeared to be nearing success. The only satisfaction we have is that we took up consistently, what we considered, the right line. On two occasions previously, namely, the question of recognition of new China and the crossing of the 38th parallel, we have been proved right by subsequent events. I am quite convinced that on this last occasion we acted rightly, both from the point of view of any principle and from the hard test of practical politics. Indeed, many of those countries who voted for the aggressor resolution evidently did so much against their will and under pressure. The

7. On 24 January, Acheson called the Chinese reply further evidence of a "contemptuous disregard of a world-wide demand for peace. Now, we must face squarely and soberly the fact that the Chinese communists have no intention of ceasing their defiance of the United Nations."

Canadian Foreign Minister, voting for this resolution, said that he considered it premature and unwise.

14. It is poor consolation to know that we have acted rightly when the world drifts towards war. Probably no immediate development of a major kind will take place for some time. But the turn that events have taken is certainly in the wrong direction and it is very difficult now to give a different twist to them. The situation in the Far East will progressively grow worse, the war in Korea will continue probably with greater vigour and there is always the possibility of its spreading. This again affects the situation in Europe and the world. The terrible rearmament race will continue and that itself is a provocation to war.

15. In Europe the major question at present is the proposal for the rearmament of Western Germany. This would be admittedly a breach of agreements arrived at. But it is felt by the Western Powers that without a rearmed Western Germany, there will be no effective break to a Soviet invasion. On the other hand, there can be no doubt that the rearmament of Germany frightens the Soviet as well as countries like Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, etc. These countries have experienced the terrible consequences of a German invasion in the past and they wish to take no risks about it in the future. Therefore, the mere act of rearmament of West Germany becomes a vital challenge to the Soviet and its associated countries. The Soviet Union had in fact made this perfectly clear. The Western nations have thus to face a very difficult dilemma. If they do not rearm Germany, then they consider themselves weak against their prospective enemies. If on the other hand they support this rearmament, then this might itself result in war even before the rearmament had proceeded far.

16. It is astonishing how fear and passion are blinding people's minds and leading them into wrong courses. When I talked with leaders in the U.K. and in France, it was patent that they wanted to prevent war and were largely in agreement with the argument that I placed before them. At the same time, they were afraid of their weakness and more particularly of any kind of major disagreement with the U.S. They were thus pulled in two different directions. While the leaders wanted to avoid war, the common people wanted to do so even more. The result of all this has been, for the present, the passing of the aggressor resolution in the U.N. and we shall now have to face the consequences of this very unwise act. So far as India is concerned, we shall naturally continue to follow the policy we have thus far pursued. I believe that, even though we did not succeed, we did produce a powerful impression on most countries. The Western countries were greatly influenced by our attitude, even though they could not ultimately endorse it. China certainly was influenced by us and it was, I think, at least partly due to our efforts that China toned down her demands and came near to negotiations.

17. It is a significant fact that in a matter affecting the Far East of Asia, hardly any Asian country is at all anxious to follow the policy now decided



upon by the U.N. Some of these countries are indeed definitely opposed to it. Thus it is mainly the countries of North and South America, plus some European countries rather reluctantly, that have laid down this policy. One would have thought that in a matter vitally affecting Asia, the views of Asian countries would have had greater weight.

18. Whether war comes in the future or not, in any event we live from now onwards in a war atmosphere and with all the energies of many nations turned towards war production. That itself has a powerful influence both politically and economically. In the economic sphere this means very heavy armament expenditure and all raw materials necessary for it to be sucked into the war machine. This will result in much higher prices and inflation. It will also result in capital goods not being available to us or to countries similarly situated. Whatever our attitude might be, we are affected by these developments and have to take stock of them. We have to realise that it is very unsafe to base our economy on foreign help of any kind. We have, therefore, to think more than ever of relying upon ourselves. This is not wholly possible at present and it may not be possible for a number of years. But whether it is possible or not, we have to face that situation and to do our utmost to meet it. There has thus far been too great a tendency to look abroad for help of various kinds. There is no harm in getting help if it is available and provided it does not come in the way of our larger policies. But if that help is not available, then the choice for us becomes limited. We have seen how foreign help almost inevitably develops into foreign interference or foreign pressure to do something which otherwise would not be done.

19. There is the food problem, the most urgent for us today. We have already made arrangements to import a large quantity of foodgrains. In addition, we have asked the U.S. Government to let us have two million tons of foodgrains on easy terms such as deferred payment, etc. It is not yet clear whether the American Congress will agree to this. We shall be happy to accept such help, but even this help would be far too expensive and dangerous if it is at the cost of entanglement in war.

20. I have referred to the food situation. There have been recently cuts in rations on the one hand, and an increase in prices on the other. Both have hit many classes of our people very badly. The cut becomes inevitable, when our stocks are low. We must remember, however, that the rations are not reduced to an extent which impairs the capacity for work, more especially of those who have to do hard physical labour. We must remember also that this critical situation demands from all of us every attempt to get the available food from the producers or their agents or their middle men. There is no doubt that there are plenty of blackmarket foodstuffs in northern India—in Delhi, in East Punjab, partly in the north-western parts of the U.P., partly West Bengal. Where does all this come from? Surely there must be an excess left over from procurement

and from consumption by the producer to enable it to go into the blackmarket. Could we not get hold of this surplus? I would earnestly request you to try your utmost to do so. This naturally applies only to those States where there is such surplus in people's hands. This is not a theoretical proposition, but something which is most vital for our present and future and we cannot afford to take an academic view. Some people may think that any pressure on the producers in this respect may have bad results in the elections to come. But nothing could have a worse result than a failure of our food policy and the troubles consequent upon it.

21. If foodgrains rations are cut down, we should try to supply, wherever we can and at moderate prices, other foodstuffs including the so-called substitutes as well as vegetables, etc. The prices of these are high. It would be desirable to try to curtail these prices or to have shops where such articles can be sold at reasonable prices. I am anxious that all of us should realise the gravity of this situation. If we do not meet it satisfactorily, then very serious consequences will flow. We have often talked of dealing with the food problems as if it was a war problem. But in spite of our talk, we have not produced the atmosphere of urgency. We take things in a leisurely fashion and expect someone else, whether it is another State or another country, to come to our help. That is a wrong approach fraught with perils.

22. I need not tell you much about Kashmir. My informal talks in London led to no result, except virulent propaganda by Pakistan. The matter is likely to come up before the Security Council soon. I have made it clear that we are perfectly prepared to have a plebiscite and that we have withdrawn part of our Army and are prepared to withdraw more of it from Kashmir, provided the Pakistan forces withdraw and we take such steps as are considered necessary, with the minimum of forces, to protect Kashmir. I do not myself see why this should come in the way of a fair plebiscite.

23. You will have followed the developments in Nepal. Undoubtedly these constitute a great popular victory. The Government of India has no desire to interfere in the affairs of Nepal but circumstances have driven it into a position when its advice is important both from the point of view of the Nepalese Government and those who rebelled against it. We are using our influence so as to bring about a peaceful transition in Nepal. It is of the utmost importance that peace and order should prevail there and a stable government should be established. We are anxious to expedite this as, till then, there will be no stability in Nepal. I hope that within the next few days some further steps will be taken. The King of Nepal has decided to return to Kathmandu before long. The immediate thing to be done is for the interim government to be formed and to function. Meanwhile, some trouble continues both on the side of the Nepalese Government and the insurgents. This is not on a big scale now but it comes very much in the way of a re-establishment of security.



24. The U.P. Legislature, after prolonged labour, passed their Zamindari Abolition Bill.<sup>8</sup> This was assented to by the President, as a reference had been made to him by the Governor. As soon as this was done, large numbers of zamindars applied for and got injunctions from the High Court to stop any implementation of this legislation.<sup>9</sup> This raises very important points. Parliament, representing the will of the people, decides on certain essential social reforms. These are then, by a process of interpretation of the Constitution, held up by the judiciary. The result may well be trouble in the rural areas of the State concerned. It is the right of the judiciary to interpret the Constitution and to apply it and none of us can or should challenge that. But if the Constitution itself comes in our way, then surely it is time to change that Constitution to that extent. It is impossible to hang up urgent social changes because the Constitution comes in the way, according to the interpretation of courts. This has happened in Bihar also. We shall have to find a remedy, even though this might involve a change in the Constitution.<sup>10</sup>

25. Having returned today from Ahmedabad, I am naturally full of the proceedings of the All India Congress Committee. I confess that I do not feel quite happy at the atmosphere that prevailed there. Nevertheless, there was, I think, a full realisation of the importance and urgency of the issues before us and, as a consequence, the main resolution of the A.I.C.C. was passed. I am enclosing a copy of this resolution.<sup>11</sup> This, I need hardly say, is not merely a resolution to be passed but something to be acted upon immediately in spirit and in letter.

26. The Republic Day celebrations in various parts of the country are reported to have been a great success and there was a good deal of popular enthusiasm. In Delhi, the military parade as well as the historical pageant were most impressive. On this occasion these celebrations had more of a popular character about them than last year. This aspect has to be encouraged.

27. I should like you and as many others as possible to see the International Engineering Exhibition which is being held in Delhi. This will probably remain

8. The U.P. Assembly passed the Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Bill on 10 January 1951 after struggling with it for two and a half years. The President assented to it on 24 January.

9. Immediately on announcement of the Presidential assent, 400 petitions for a writ of mandamus against the Act were filed before the Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court and 4,000 similar petitions were filed in the Allahabad High Court. On 25 January 1951, the two benches issued interim injunctions restraining the U.P. Government from taking possession of the zamindars' properties in U.P. and issuing any notification under clause 4 of the Act.

10. The Constitution (First Amendment) Act, 1951, passed in June 1951, removed the Zamindari Acts from the purview of the Courts.

11. See *ante*, pp. 115-116.

open for another six weeks or more. It is not only a fine exhibition and profitable to those who see it, but it shows also the advances in Indian engineering and to the great public works, more especially river valley schemes, that we are undertaking. Unfortunately not many people realise what constructive work is being done in India today. We hear much about the failings of Government and very little of these great advances. The work done so far in engineering projects as well as in scientific development has been remarkable. I attended the Indian Science Congress at Bangalore on the 2nd January.<sup>12</sup> I was unable to be present, much as I wanted to go there, at the centenary celebration of the Geological Survey of India.<sup>13</sup> The great scientific laboratories that we have built up fill me with enthusiasm whenever I see them. By laying the foundations of large-scale scientific work, we have done something which is of essential importance for the future of India. The results may not come immediately, but they are bound to come.

28. As you know, we are trying our utmost to cut down expenditure in the Central Government, sometimes, I regret to say, at the expense of many desirable schemes. There is no escape from this at present and I hope your Government will also economise to the best of its ability. It is as a part of this economy drive, as well as to bring about greater efficiency in our work, that there has been a reorganisation of some Ministries in the Central Government.<sup>14</sup>

29. The next session of Parliament begins on February 5th. This will have important work to consider, apart from the Budget. I do not envy the Finance Minister in the preparation of his Budget this year. It is a very difficult task when our resources are so limited and when we cannot do so much that we want to do. But even more important for us is to think hard as to what general line of policy we should adopt to meet the economic situation which faces us. Merely to economise, and that too in useful projects, cannot by itself lead to any kind of progress. It is at best a static position and it may be worse. Therefore, it has become necessary to go deeper into this question. We are giving earnest thought to it in the Planning Commission and I hope that in the course of the next two months or so, we shall be able to put forward certain proposals for your consideration. I hope you are also giving thought to these matters and I shall welcome an expression of your views on them.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

12. See *ante*, pp. 76-84.

13. Held in Calcutta from 1 to 14 January 1951.

14. The Ministries of Food and Agriculture were amalgamated on 17 January 1951.



## VII

New Delhi  
February 18, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

There has been no marked change in the international situation since I wrote to you last. So far as Korea is concerned, the United Nations, at the instance of the United States, passed a resolution branding China as an aggressor. This resolution, as originally drafted, also suggested that some sanctions should be applied against China. Under pressure of the United Kingdom and some other countries, a slight variation was made and this sanctions clause was dropped. But a committee was appointed to consider this question. Although the resolution was toned down to some extent by this variation, in effect it produced the result that we feared. The door to any negotiations was practically shut in spite of the fact that some kind of a Good Offices Committee was proposed to be appointed to carry on negotiations. This rather dual approach, that is, of branding China as an aggressor and thinking in terms of sanctions, and at the same time suggesting negotiations, was self-contradictory and could hardly be expected to produce any results. China considered it an insult and refused to have anything to do with the Good Offices Committee. Perhaps, the passing of the resolution produced a certain feeling of satisfaction in the United States. But I am sure that the U.K., Canada and some other countries were rather unhappy and indeed, the Canadian representative, although voting for the resolution, described it as "premature and unwise."

2. On behalf of India, Shri B.N. Rau voted against it and explained our position fully and frankly.<sup>1</sup> Subsequently, the President of the U.N. General Assembly invited India to join the three-man Good Offices Committee. We were unable to accept this offer because that Good Offices Committee was a child of this resolution and could only function in terms of it. After some delay, this Committee was appointed. But it is obvious that it can do nothing effective as China refuses to deal with it. We have some indications, however, that China would like to go ahead with negotiations, and it has been rather vaguely suggested that any proposal for such negotiations outside the United Nations might be acceptable. It is rather doubtful if any such step is likely to be taken in the near future.

3. Meanwhile, war goes on in Korea and that country is being utterly ruined. For some weeks, there was no major fighting and it was indeed rumoured that the Chinese forces had been partly withdrawn from Korea. The U.N. forces,

1. B.N. Rau said the chances of success through negotiations were marred as the resolution proposing negotiations also condemned a Government. He thought that the Arab-Asian resolution would have brought about ceasefire within perhaps a week.

which had previously been drifting southward, far beyond Seoul, found that there was no pressure upon them and, recovering, gradually advanced northwards. This removal of immediate danger led to a more optimistic view being taken of the military situation, and yet there was little reason for this. Lately, North Korean resistance, aided by the Chinese, has stiffened.

4. You must have seen the statement I made in Parliament<sup>2</sup> about the Far Eastern situation, as well as about Kashmir. I dealt with the Kashmir position rather fully because there has been a great deal of misconception in regard to it. A spate of virulent propaganda, accompanied by threats of holy war, has been going on in Pakistan, and the British and American press has apparently got rather unnerved by this propaganda and threats. There has been much criticism of India in regard to Kashmir in the foreign press. Those countries, which do not approve of our Far Eastern policy, have tried to draw invidious comparisons between that policy and our Kashmir policy. For my part, I am convinced that the policy we have pursued in regard to Korea and China has been fundamentally right. Indeed, the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference very largely agreed with it, although some of the Commonwealth countries did not act in consonance with it at the United Nations subsequently.

5. As regards Kashmir, the position, in spite of its complications, is a simple one. We have agreed to a plebiscite and we still stand by that agreement. We are prepared to have the plebiscite on the fairest possible terms and to give authority to the Plebiscite Commissioner to supervise this plebiscite fully. We are prepared to withdraw our troops to the utmost extent compatible with security. We have already withdrawn a good part of our forces from there, even though Pakistan has not done so. We could withdraw even more if Pakistan withdrew her forces. Apart from keeping her Army in Kashmir State territory, Pakistan continues to indulge in hysterical campaigns full of threats of war. It is clear that there can be no settlement or agreement so long as these threats are held out. It seems to me equally clear that no plebiscite is possible with this background of holy war.

6. It is said sometimes that the life of Pakistan depends upon the possession of Kashmir. It is not quite clear what this means, but sometimes it is explained that this refers to the fact that the head waters of certain Punjab rivers are in Kashmir State territory. These rivers are the Indus, the Jhelum and the Chenab. This argument has no force whatever. The Indus flows through the far north of Kashmir State through mountainous territory and no one has ever thought of interfering with this flow. The Jhelum comes out of the Kashmir Valley through deep gorges and runs on to the Punjab. Probably nothing short of an atom bomb will affect its course. As for the Chenab, it is a physical possibility,

2. See *ante*, pp. 502-509.



though very difficult, to drain away part of these waters. Practically speaking, all these have no significance. In any event, it should be perfectly easy to have an agreement about these rivers with any assurances or guarantee that might be necessary. The fact of the matter is that the Kashmir problem is not considered by Pakistan as a political or economic problem. It would be easy enough to settle it on that basis. But it is definitely not easy for any settlement to be reached which is based on religious divisions or on threats.

7. For many days now, we have been waiting for the Kashmir matter to come up again before the Security Council. Rumours float about to the effect that the U.K. and the U.S.A. are busy evolving some kind of a resolution for the Security Council.<sup>3</sup> We have no idea yet of what this resolution is likely to be. That is rather curious, for one would have thought that the only chance of success of such a resolution was to have it framed in consultation with the parties concerned.

8. It appears probable that the U.S. Congress will agree to sending us one million tons of foodgrains. The President of the United States has recommended this, but I must confess that some of his suggestions in this connection are rather odd. One of this is that there should be propaganda in India to the effect that America had given us these foodgrains. We shall be duly grateful if we get any assistance of this kind from the U.S., because our position in regard to food is a very difficult one. But it will be unfortunate if any attempt is made to attach strings to such a gift. We have to wait, for the present, for the resolution of the U.S. Congress.

9. As you know, we have strained every nerve to get food from outside. We hope to get over the difficult period this year, though full relief cannot be given. The basic fact of the food situation, however, stares us in the face. We cannot be dependent in regard to it on foreign countries for long. It is essential that we make ourselves more or less self-sufficient. If we do not do so and crisis comes over the world, then we shall be left high and dry and might not be able to get food from abroad. I feel that there is far too much of a tendency among some States to look forward to food from outside or through the Centre and not think and work with the urgent desire of producing enough food for their own needs. Those States that have some surplus hold on to it. If unfortunately war comes, then our position will become difficult indeed. Therefore, it is of essential importance that we should try our utmost to rely on our resources and to increase them.

10. Very recently the King of Nepal returned to his capital<sup>4</sup> after nearly a hundred days' stay in Delhi. Recent developments in Nepal have demonstrated, I think, the essential soundness of the policy we adopted and the advice we

3. See *ante*, pp. 293-300.

4. On 15 February 1951.

gave. The first and very difficult stage is now over. But, in some ways, an even more difficult stage remains. It would be absurd to imagine that all the basic conflicts and problems of Nepal have been solved. Far from it. But we have got over a big hurdle and pointed the way for a solution. The next month or two will show how far the Nepalese people are capable of working together for the solution of their many problems.

11. During the last two weeks, two more National Laboratories have been started—one at Roorkee<sup>5</sup> and the other in Lucknow.<sup>6</sup> This completes our programme for these Laboratories. Some of them are working fully, some are likely to be ready soon, and in regard to one or two building operations have begun. I think that the building and equipping of these Laboratories in a very short time, and the work that they are doing, redounds greatly to the credit of India. It is an achievement of which we might well be proud. These Laboratories are first-rate both in appearance and the work done.

12. We sent Shri N.R. Pillai, Cabinet Secretary, to Karachi a few days ago to start talks about a trade settlement between India and Pakistan. It is obvious that, normally speaking, there should be full trade between these two countries. It is harmful to both to put barriers to it. Yet, because of political and other considerations, these barriers have continued. We should like to lower them and to have openings in them, even though we cannot wholly remove them at present. In the course of a day or two, a conference is going to be held in Karachi to explore this subject of trade further.

13. I need not remind you of the urgent necessity for every economy. For the Central Budget, we have sat day after day trying to reduce our expenditure not only on capital projects, but also on recurring expenditure. We have demobilized a number of our Army men and we propose to continue this process. We are anxious to put India on a firm basis, so that we can advance later on. I hope your Government is following the same policy.

14. In our budgets, we frequently find very large estimates for buildings. Most of the money we have got goes into brick, water and cement. I think that we should revise this policy and, except for very special buildings, we should try to carry on with relatively cheaper structures. Our Cabinet has strongly recommended this. It does not matter if a cheaper structure cannot survive more than a few years. We can use it till then and save heavy capital expenditure now.

15. You have, no doubt, learnt that Shri Mahavir Tyagi, M.P., has been appointed a Minister of State in the Finance Ministry.<sup>7</sup> I am sure that we shall profit by this appointment.

5. The Central Building Research Institute. See *ante*, pp. 84-86.

6. The Central Drug Research Institute. See *ante*, pp. 91-94.

7. On 16 February 1951.



16. Three days ago, I made a statement in Parliament in which I referred to certain periodicals in India. While appreciating the role of newspapers generally, I pointed out that some weekly periodicals specially had passed all limits of decency and were carrying on persistently a propaganda full of falsehood and malice. I had in mind then three weekly journals of Bombay — the *Atom*, the *Blitz*, and the *Current* — but there are many others, equally bad, in other parts of the country. In particular some of the Indian language papers have been bad. Normally one does not take notice of this kind of thing, as even a denial gives publicity to an allegation. But to remain silent may also have bad consequences. In any event, this matter requires full consideration. I have appealed to newspaper editors to take it in hand.<sup>8</sup> If they fail, then something else will have to be thought of.

17. I returned to Delhi from Lucknow at quarter past eleven this morning. About half an hour after that I was informed of the sudden death of my colleague Shri Khurshed Lal,<sup>9</sup> Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Communications. He felt unwell last evening and spent a very bad night. This morning he was removed to Willingdon Nursing Home where he died soon after as a result of a heart attack. He had previously suffered from thrombosis, but for a considerable time past he had had no particular trouble to our knowledge. His death has been a very severe blow to us in many ways. He had amply justified his appointment by his work and was one of the most popular Members of Parliament. Both by his ability, tact and good humour he had shown his capacity to undertake wider responsibilities. After much thought we had decided to appoint him as our High Commissioner in Pakistan, a post which is of first importance. For some of us, and I am of that number, he was a personal friend with whom we had been associated in public work for nearly thirty years. It is thus a matter of deep grief to me to report this to you.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

8. Nehru stated in Parliament on 16 February 1951, "It is for the leaders of the newspaper world in India to consider this matter with all seriousness with a view to prevent this degradation which cannot but affect the whole public life of our country."

9. For Nehru's tribute to Khurshed Lal, see *post*, pp. 657-658.

16

MISCELLANEOUS

I. Personal





## 1. To Vallabhbhai Patel<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

November 14, 1950

My dear Vallabhbhai,

Thank you so much for your very affectionate message of greetings on my birthday.<sup>2</sup> Somehow, I have felt very dispirited today because of all kinds of happenings in India and the world. This world and this country of ours seems to go awry and I feel more and more that I am doing little that I want to do. I work hard, but doubts come to me as to the results of that work. So many things happen, which depress me. One can only work with energy and a measure of enthusiasm if one has certain definite ideals and objectives. If the ideals fade, then that energy and enthusiasm also fade.

All these thoughts have been coming to me on this, my sixty-first birthday and they did not make me feel cheerful. But the affection of my friends goes a long way to hold me up.

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal

1. J.N. Collection.
2. In the message Patel further wrote, "Relations between us transcend formalities, and I need hardly say anything more than this: it is my fervent and heartfelt prayer that you may live long and well to lead the country through all difficulties and establish in it an era of peace, happiness and prosperity...."

## 2. To B.G. Kratochvil<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

November 20, 1950

My dear Ambassador,<sup>2</sup>

Thank you so much for your good wishes on my birthday. Beauty, freedom and truth—do they not cover almost every good thing that we can think of? What exactly they are is however much more difficult to find out.

With all good wishes to you,

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.
2. (1901-1972); Czech politician and diplomat; Ambassador to India, 1947-51; resigned his appointment and sought asylum in Britain, 1951; wrote and translated books on psychology and pedagogy.



### 3. To Mrs Henry F. Grady<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
December 16, 1950

My dear Mrs Grady,<sup>2</sup>

Your little note reached me today and gave me pleasure. It was especially welcome at a time when we have all had a severe blow in the death of an old friend and comrade, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

We are indeed living in most difficult times. All we can do is try our utmost to think and act according to our lights. The new year promises little relief and is full of foreboding. And yet we have to hope for the best and work for it. I have found some relief in trying to work in this way, though what result it might bring, I do not know.

It is always a pleasure to hear about you and sometimes news comes through common friends.

You know that you will always be very welcome in India.

With all good wishes to you for the New Year,

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Wife of the American Ambassador to India in 1947-48.

### 4. To Emilie Schenk<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
January 27, 1951

Dear Frau Emilie Schenk,<sup>2</sup>

I have long wanted to write to you, but somehow I hesitated. I have however had news of you from time to time from our Minister in Berne, Mr Desai,<sup>3</sup> and from other friends.

I need not tell you I am greatly interested in you and your daughter.<sup>4</sup> I would have liked to meet you, but unfortunately it was not possible for me to

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Widow of Subhas Chandra Bose.

3. D.B. Desai.

4. Anita Bose.

go to Vienna. I am now writing to you not as Prime Minister of India but in my personal capacity and as an old friend of Subhas Bose.

We should very much like to make some kind of a settlement for your daughter. We should of course like to help you too and indeed I told Mr Desai sometime ago to do so. I understand that Amiya Bose<sup>5</sup> saw you and has arranged some kind of assistance for you. That is right. But perhaps it would be desirable to have some fixed arrangement for this purpose. This of course would not be officially done and the Government of India would have nothing to do with it. It would be a matter entirely between friends.

It would greatly facilitate making of a settlement for your daughter if you would come to India. In any such settlement you would naturally be the guardian and in charge of the money settled. If you could come here, this work could be carried through. It would also give us much pleasure to meet you and your daughter. Naturally all your travel expenses will be arranged from here and you will be our guest in India. There will be no difficulty about arranging all this.

I shall be happy to hear from you.

With all good wishes to you,

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

5. Amiyanath Bose (b. 1915), nephew of Subhas Chandra Bose.

## 5. To Vijayalakshmi Pandit<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 2, 1951

Nan dear,

...Since my return here, I have tried to remain calm and objective and not to allow myself to be frustrated by the multitude of problems that surround me. Three weeks' absence has greatly added to this burden, as everything was allowed to wait till I came back. Soon after I went to Ahmedabad for the A.I.C.C. meeting and I returned yesterday. That meeting was, in some ways, outwardly a success. But I disliked the atmosphere and have come back with a bad taste in my mouth. We go on trying to improve the Congress, but I must confess that I am not optimistic. What rather frightens me is the way all kinds of people look to me to solve every problem.

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.



This month of February and indeed succeeding months are heavy with work and difficult. Parliament begins in three days' time. Apart from the normal work, I have to keep in touch with large numbers of people, Ministers, officials in Delhi and outside, and then the number of people who come from abroad and want to see me grows daily. I have become some kind of an institution.

I have just seen a telegram from you to Bajpai in which you mention the Egyptian Ambassador's reference to what I said at Cairo about the withdrawal of British troops.<sup>2</sup> I have been incorrectly reported and the matter was cleared in Cairo by our Ambassador.<sup>3</sup> In a day or two I shall answer a question in Parliament on this subject. What I actually said was that I was all for the removal of foreign troops but owing to the threatening international situation, the U.K. Government would no doubt hesitate to do so. That is to say I was not giving my opinion but analysing the situation and what the reaction of the U.K. might be....

With love from  
Jawaharlal

2. See *ante*, p. 461.

3. A.A.A. Fyzee.

## 6. To Nayantara Sahgal<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 2, 1951

My dear Tara,

I received your letter today. I am sending an answer immediately because if I delay, you may have to wait a long time for the answer.

I can very well understand your urge and your difficulties. Both are natural and I am not quite sure that I can help you much in finding an answer to your questions. I think it is right for you to feel this urge to do something that might be called worthwhile outside the domestic sphere. One cannot ignore the domestic sphere, but a wider activity gives more meaning to life and therefore makes it richer. What that activity should be must necessarily depend

1. J.N. Collection.

upon a person's own temperament, aptitude and liking. It is no good laying down a hard and fast rule.

You can of course do writing work for which you are fitted. But again that writing work should have content in it and some purpose. I do not mean that you should moralise. What I mean is that rather empty essay-writing, however well done, is apt to be thin stuff. In the final analysis, one writes from one's own experience of life. The richer the experience the better the writing.

Apart from this, it is good to do something which takes one out of one's ivory tower and domestic circle. What this is, again, I cannot easily indicate. The other day I went from Ahmedabad to a village about twenty miles out, where Mrs Ambalal Sarabhai<sup>2</sup> had organised a centre for women. This was under the Kasturba Trust. It was an excellent centre which not only gives all kinds of help to the village women but gave them self-reliance and raised their morale. Any activity that brings one in touch with the underprivileged and the unhappy produces a double reaction. There may be the reaction of dislike and a desire to keep away from it and there may also be an urge to do something about it. Naturally what one does is probably very little in the larger context of things. But it counts and, what is more, it does good to the doer and gives him or her a better perspective of life and its problems.

There are many odd activities which a person can undertake within an easy distance of home. One may interest oneself in, say, the food problem. Even growing more food in the shape of vegetables, etc., and urging people round about to do so is of some help. There is so much to be done in helping those who stand in need of help that one can never be at a loss for work. The thing is to find out the right kind of work to suit one's temperament and capacity. I have no great liking for the society slumming type of work, which is more for show than for anything else. The point is one should start doing anything in as small a way as possible and then gradually try to find one's way.

As for joining the Congress, it does not matter whether you do so or not. In the balance, it might be better to join it and watch what it does. It is possible to find opportunities of social service through the Congress or through the women's organisations.

I do not know if this letter will help you at all.

Your loving  
Mamoo

2. Sarladevi Sarabhai.







16

MISCELLANEOUS

II. Personalities





## 1. Vallabhbhai Patel<sup>1</sup>

I should like to pay my homage of respect and affection to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel on the occasion of his completing his seventy-fifth year.<sup>2</sup> Few persons can have such a long and notable record of service to their credit as Sardar Patel has had. Even so, he is at the helm of affairs, vital to the nation and carrying a great responsibility and we all hope that he will have many long years of health and service before him.

I look back on thirty years of comradeship and intimate contact with him in national activities. It has been a period full of ups and downs and great happenings and all of us have been tested to the utmost. Sardar Patel has emerged from these ordeals as a dominating figure on the Indian scene, to whom vast numbers look for guidance. May he be spared long to us and to the country.

1. Message to Kanayalal N. Desai, President, Gujarat Pradesh Congress Committee, on the occasion of the seventy-fifth birthday of Vallabhbhai Patel, New Delhi, 24 October 1950. File No. 9/148/50-PMS.
2. On 31 October 1950.

## 2. George Bernard Shaw<sup>1</sup>

We can hardly grieve for the passing away of Bernard Shaw at the age of ninety-four.<sup>2</sup> But Shaw had become so much a part of our individual thinking and of the mental climate of our times that his death comes as a blow. He was not only one of the greatest figures of the age, but one who influenced the thought of vast numbers of human beings during two generations. Behind his mockery and lightheartedness, there lay deep wisdom and a measure of frustration coming from a lack of appreciation of that wisdom. People laughed with him and enjoyed his plays as those of an expert craftsman, but not many paid heed to the deep lessons which his writings contain.

1. Statement to the press, New Delhi, 2 November 1950. File No. 2(541)/50-PMS.
2. He died on 2 November 1950.



### 3. Sri Aurobindo<sup>1</sup>

The news of Sri Aurobindo's death, with all its suddenness, came to all of us as a shock. He was more than a great individual. He had become an institution and no one thought that he would pass so soon. Those of an older generation remember him as a flaming torch of India's freedom. In later years, he was far removed from the political field and devoted himself in retirement to philosophy and religion. His astonishing brilliance of mind impressed itself in his books and, though relatively few persons met him during these years, his books carried his message far. One of the greatest minds of our generation has passed and we all mourn this great loss.

1. Statement on the death of Sri Aurobindo, 5 December 1950. From the *National Herald*, 6 December 1950.

### 4. Vallabhbhai Patel<sup>1</sup>

I have to convey to you, Sir, and to the House mournful news. A little over an hour ago, at nine thirty-seven this morning, the Deputy Prime Minister, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, passed away in Bombay city. Three days ago many of us saw him off at the Willingdon airfield and we hoped that his stay in Bombay would enable him to get back his health which had been so grievously shattered by hard work and continuous worry. For a day or two he seemed to improve, but at last early this morning he had a relapse and the story of his great life ended.

It is a great story, as all of us know, as the whole country knows, and history will record it in many pages and call him the builder and consolidator of the new India and will say many things about him. But perhaps to many of us here he will be remembered as a great captain of our forces in the struggle for freedom and as one who gave us sound advice in times of troubles as well as in moments of victory, as a friend and colleague on whom one could invariably rely, as a tower of strength which revived wavering hearts when

1. Statement in Parliament, 15 December 1950. *Parliamentary Debates, Official Report*, 1950, Vol. VII, Part II, cols 1829-1830.

we were in trouble. We shall remember him as a friend and a colleague and comrade above all, and I who have sat here on this bench side by side with him for these several years will feel rather forlorn and a certain emptiness will steal upon me when I look to his empty bench.

I can say little more on this occasion. My colleague, Mr Rajagopalachari, and I are going almost immediately to pay our last tribute and homage to him in Bombay. I understand that the President has also decided to go to Bombay immediately, and the Speaker, Sir, went early this morning. I have no doubt that many of my colleagues and honourable Members of this House would have liked to go to Bombay on this occasion to pay this last tribute, but I feel that he, magnificent worker that he was, would not have liked us to leave our work and just go in large numbers to Bombay at this moment. So I have asked my colleagues to stay here, except for Mr Rajagopalachari who was perhaps amongst all of us here the oldest of Sardar Patel's colleagues and comrades. And it is right that he should go and it is right that that other old colleague of his, the President, should also go. For the rest it is up to us to carry on the work here and elsewhere, for the work of the country never stops, never should stop. And so, in spite of this grievous sorrow that has come over us we have to steel ourselves to carry on the work in which the great man, great friend and colleague, who has passed away, played such a magnificent part.

## 5. An Unmatched Warrior<sup>1</sup>

At nine thirty-seven on the morning of Friday, December 15, 1950, the hand of death fell on Sardar Patel and put an end to the life of a great Indian and an unmatched warrior in the cause of freedom, a lover of India, a great servant of the people and a statesman of genius and mighty achievement. The same evening, in the city of Bombay, where he had laboured for a great part of his life in the cause of India's freedom, his mortal remains were reduced to ashes.

More than thirty-four years ago, he fell under the spell of the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, and from that day onwards his magnificent talents and abounding energy were devoted to the struggle for India's freedom.

1. Resolution mourning the death of Vallabhbhai Patel, drafted by Nehru for the Cabinet meeting on 16 December 1950. J.N. Collection.



By his matchless courage, inflexible sense of discipline, and genius for organisation, he became one of the principal lieutenants of the Father of the Nation and a great leader in India's struggle. His championship of the poor and underprivileged made him the leader of the peasant campaign at Bardoli. The success of that movement demonstrated his capacity for leadership and his great organising power. Under that leadership the peasants of Bardoli maintained the strictest discipline in the face often of grave provocation. Bardoli became a symbol and an inspiration to the rest of India.

In failing health he continued, without rest or respite, his service of India. When freedom came at last to India, it was inevitable that he should take an outstanding part in the service of free India. It was fortunate for India that Sardar Patel should have had this opportunity to put the coping-stone to his life's labour. He had, as it now appears, only a little more than three years to give in that service, and these years were periods of great turmoil and conflict in India and the world and, for him personally, of increasing ill-health and physical weakness. Yet his achievements during this period will be recorded in India's history with pride and admiration. He concentrated his attention on the great task of unifying the country and maintaining its stability at a time when disruptive forces were at work. In particular, his genius was demonstrated in the way he handled the difficult and complicated problem of the old Indian States. He fixed his goal, a united and strong India, and set about to achieve it with skill and determination. Step by step he advanced towards this goal, ever keeping the final objective before himself and others and at the same time by negotiation and friendly compromise winning the willing consent of the people he was dealing with. Thus, without any ill-feeling on the part of the rulers or the people of those States, he made a united India out of a welter of States, whose separate existence would have been a powerful force for disintegration in these troublous times.

He devoted himself also to the maintenance of peace and stability of India which were continuously challenged by internal strife and by the conflict that has been the heritage of the post-war world all over.

As Deputy Prime Minister and in charge of two of the most important portfolios of Home and States, a heavy responsibility was cast upon him. That burden and responsibility he bore with patient courage, wisdom and equanimity. To the people of India and to the Governments at the Centre and in the States, the loss of Sardar Patel is grievous and irreplaceable. Yet he laid solid foundations and that work has to be carried on by those that follow him. It is for the people of this country to follow his shining example, his devotion to duty, his steadfastness, his sense of discipline, and thus to realise in ever growing degree that free and strong and prosperous India for which he laboured. That will be the true and imperishable monument to his memory and that of the Father of the Nation who led him to his path of destiny.

## 6. Khurshed Lal<sup>1</sup>

I have to bring to your notice, Sir, and to the notice of the House, with deep sorrow, the death of Shri Khurshed Lal, a Member of this House and a Member of our Government.<sup>2</sup> The death took place in somewhat extraordinary circumstances and with extraordinary suddenness and therefore the shock of it has been all the greater for us. Every Member of this House knew him well and it is not for me therefore to say much about him. We were all acquainted with his cheerful and smiling countenance and I think all of us recognised the quality of his work, even as Government recognised it. It was because of that quality that we had very recently selected him for one of the most difficult and one of the highest posts in our Foreign Service<sup>3</sup> and it is therefore a grievous loss to Government and to the public service and to this House that he is no more.

We shall all miss him, but probably some of us will miss him even more than others, because he had been a comrade of ours even before he came to this House and during those long periods of trial and tribulation we got to know each other very well. He started his career at the Bar with great promise and very soon he rose to some eminence in it and then the call came to him, as it came to many of us, and he left his practice at the Bar and joined the national movement and threw his lot in the struggle for freedom. I was trying to remember when I met him for the first time. As far as I recall, I met him twenty-one years ago behind the prison walls of Dehra Dun, a place where many years of my life have been spent. Since then, we met often inside prison and outside and we had many occasions of taking measure of each other and I do not remember a single occasion during these twenty-one years when I found Shri Khurshed Lal lose his equanimity of temper or his cheerfulness, whatever trial or tribulation came in his or our way. During the intervals when he was not in prison, he took to municipal affairs in Dehra Dun and became Chairman of the Municipality, and there also he distinguished himself and his record is still remembered. Then he came to this House and from that time onwards the House is fully aware of what he has done. Government attached the greatest value to his work and for some time past we were thinking of how to utilise his high abilities and sense of responsibility

1. Statement in Parliament, 19 February 1951. *Parliamentary Debates, Official Report*, 1951, Vol. VIII, Part II, cols 3060-3062.
2. Khurshed Lal, Deputy Minister for Communications, Government of India, since September 1948, died of a heart attack on 18 February at the age of forty-seven.
3. A few days before his death Lal was appointed High Commissioner of India in Pakistan.



and, as I just now said, we had chosen him for one of our most difficult posts.

To all of us his loss is a considerable one and perhaps it is the greatest to my colleague, the Minister of Communications,<sup>4</sup> for whom he was not only a colleague and a helper but almost a younger brother. Indeed, most of us belong to that larger family who, during this quarter of a century and more, functioned as colleagues and brothers in a large sense and got to know each other's virtues and failings and thus got to respect each other and have great affection for each other. Many of us in these past years have passed away one by one and for those who remain it becomes a harder task. I am sure that every Member of this House will join me in offering tribute to this bright young man whose life has been cut short, and in sending our message of sympathy—deep sympathy—to his wife and children.

4. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai.

## MISCELLANEOUS

## III. Chancellorship of Cambridge University





## 1. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

Newspapers announced my nomination for Cambridge Chancellorship.<sup>2</sup> I have been waiting to hear from you. Embarrassing questions are put to me. Please telegraph what position is.<sup>3</sup> As I have told you I do not wish to be entangled in this matter and on no account am I going to be a party to a contest.

1. New Delhi, 30 October 1950. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Papers nominating Nehru as a candidate were handed in on 28 October.
3. Krishna Menon telegraphed on 31 October that the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University had written to him enquiring whether Nehru had accepted the nomination. Krishna Menon also reported overwhelming support for Nehru among Senators, who cited the case of Prince Albert who, upon being nominated, had refrained from interfering with the decision of the Senate. Besides Nehru's nomination was regarded "as a recognition of the present position of Asia and India."

## 2. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram No. 6465 dated 1st November. I have given careful consideration to all that you and Pethick-Lawrence have said.<sup>2</sup> One aspect has perhaps not been considered by you. Even my standing for election in a contest against Tedder<sup>3</sup> is not at all agreeable to Indian opinion. In the event of my losing in that contest there would be strong feeling in India and to some extent even Indo-British relations might be affected. This is a serious matter and I do not think we should take any such risk. As a matter of fact the whole idea of such a contest is greatly disliked by people here.

1. New Delhi, 2 November 1950. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Pethick-Lawrence, after discussions with Krishna Menon, had conveyed three options for Nehru: (a) he could say that he had not given his consent and that he had not desired to contest an election or be a party to bringing about a contest; (b) he could decline nomination and say that election was taking place against his wishes; (c) if elected, he could refuse the post. Krishna Menon pointed out that the sponsors were determined to assert their rights to nominate Nehru, the candidate's consent not being necessary under the statutes.
3. Arthur William Tedder (1890-1967); Marshal of the Royal Air Force; Chief of the Air Staff, 1946-50. He had also been nominated for the Chancellorship.



I presume this election represents a contest between the older and more conservative section and the younger and more progressive one. I greatly appreciate the honour of my name being put forward by a large number of electors.<sup>4</sup> I am particularly grateful to Pethick-Lawrence and would have liked to fall in with his views. But reactions in India have apparently not been considered in England and the matter has been viewed largely from British viewpoint. Indian reactions have great importance. These reactions are strongly unfavourable to the idea of my contesting this election with Tedder and failure would have still more unfortunate repercussions.

It is clear that attempts have been made to get Tedder's name to be withdrawn and these have not succeeded. In view of all these circumstances it seems to be imperative that an election should be avoided. I would suggest that those who have done me the honour of proposing my name should say that at my request and because I do not wish to enter into any contest they have withdrawn my name. They can put it as they like provided the conclusion is the same. I have no desire to embarrass them or to appear discourteous to the University or the electors. But I would like them to save me from embarrassment as well as to possible unfortunate reactions in India of an election.

4. Eighty-nine members of the Senate, mostly younger dons, formally nominated Nehru, while the minimum requirement was fifty. Distinguished University figures like Bertrand Russell, E.M. Forster, R.A. Butler, Pethick-Lawrence and Mountbatten also supported Nehru's candidature.

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MISCELLANEOUS

IV. General





# 1. To S. Sadanand<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

February 25, 1951

My dear Sadanand,<sup>2</sup>

Thank you for your two letters dated February 16th which I have read with care and interest. Some of your suggestions, though good, are hardly feasible. We can hardly change the Congress Constitution every few months. Certain changes were made at the last session and I rather doubt if the A.I.C.C. have the authority to make any further changes.

I entirely agree with you that the call of the country is far greater than the call of office. Indeed the call of office has no meaning at all unless it is associated with the call of the country. But this enunciation of principle does not help. What is wanted is a clear understanding as to what should be done, apart from theory. I find a great deal of criticism of Government, and much of it can be justified, but I do not find much of an attempt at wrestling with the present-day problems in a practical way and suggesting solutions. To say that we must have socialism does not by itself help, except insofar as it represents a certain outlook. What practical steps have we to take in the immediate present so as to tackle the problems of the day and at the same time to give a lead for the objects of tomorrow?

Our Planning Commission has been trying hard to consider this practical aspect of our problems. Before we endeavour to answer a question, we must know what the question is. Most people do not even frame the question accurately, but are anxious to give an answer.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Managing Editor, *Free Press Journal*, Bombay.



## 2. To Dorothy C. Wilson<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
February 25, 1951

Dear Mrs Wilson,<sup>2</sup>

I have received today your letter of December 29th together with a copy of the Kodachrome. Thank you for both. The picture is a good one and I am passing it on to my daughter.

It is heartening to read what you have written about my activities. Somehow, the world seems to have lost its balance in more ways than one and I do not quite know when and how it will recover it.

With all good wishes to you,

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

2. (b. 1904); American novelist, playwright, biographer and writer of children's literature.

Anjuman Pashtoon	association of Pathans (in India)
ashram	hermitage
babu	clerk
Balkan-ji-Bari	children's garden (a child welfare society)
chakra	wheel
Diwali	festival of lights
gompa	Buddhist monastery
gram panchayat	village council
gur	jaggery
hakim	practitioner of Unani medicine
Holi	festival of spring
Jai Hind	victory to India
jehad	holy war against infidels
Khudai Khidmatgars	servants of God (an organisation in N.W.F.P.)
Mahatma Gandhi ki jai	victory to Mahatma Gandhi
mai bap	parental (administration)
Paigha	an estate assigned to a noble in former Hyderabad state for maintenance of his family as well as a standing army
Pakhtoon Jirga	council of elders of Pathans
panchas	members of a village council
Pandit	learned person
pir	Muslim saint or holy man
rajguru	royal priest
sadhu	ascetic
Saheb	a word of respect placed after a man's name
Terai	marshy jungle area between the lower foothills of the Himalayas and the plains
thana	police station
vaid	practitioner of Ayurvedic medicine
Yuvaraj	heir apparent





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